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I

A BURIED TREASURE

A STORY IN TWO PARTS—PART I

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WHEN the sunlight came straight through the doorway and made a square block of light on the kitchen floor Philadelphia Blair knew that the noon of day was approaching. Now the sun was printing its noon mark within the door and her woodbox was empty, Andy Blair being away on some remote part of the farm patching a fence. She slammed the kitchen door after her and went out in anger, stepping quickly through the hot sunlight. She looked back once at the small brown house which was withered by the sun and swollen by the rain, and she saw that it drooped slightly toward the earth, the roof bowed delicately to meet the curve of the planet. The shut door was blank against the summer sunlight, and the hens about the door followed Philadelphia in a concern for corn, but she brushed them from her path with a windy apron and thought again in anger of the dinner that stood uncooked.

At the end of the garden she climbed a low fence and went up through a bare pasture to the brow of the hill where Andy worked. His bent back seemed very tall behind his patched coat as she mounted the hill, and his regard for the fence seemed to spread over the whole front of the hill, as if a fence were more than food for the mouth and more than fire for cooking. He made a slow elaborate care of the fence, delaying each act and making each important, and she stood by watching but saying nothing. When he had patched at the wires for five minutes she said:

"I reckon you're not a hungry man. Dinnertime right here at us and the summer cabbage on the stove in cold water, waiten to boil. A man-person is a contrarious sort, the best you'd find, but you are a poor make-out-like man as ever I did see. You can go hungry till you get home some firewood."

He slowed his acts to meet these accusations, making a great matter of the fence, deliberating on the set of a

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wire and the space of the staples. When he had established the importance of the fence with the last blow of his hammer, he took his axe from the ground and climbed over the fence, going a little way into his cornfield. He began to dig at an old stump to break it apart, making firewood. Philadelphia went over the fence and presently she began to gather the pieces of wood into her apron.

As she stooped to take up the wood she saw the world from under her looped-up apron and saw it lying out reversed in her bent vision, strange, up-side-down, and remote in its spaces. She remembered a story of an old war and remembered that a battle had been fought in that place, stories of people fleeing from their homes, of parts of missiles turned up by the plow. The old soil about the stump gave back a withered, empty odor and the rotting flakes of wood fell softly from her hands.

"What's taken the dog?" Andy asked. "I never see the dog in such a swivet before."

The dog had come to the stump while Philadelphia gathered her apron full of the wood. The hound was clawing at the base of the stump and making quick, nervous motions about the roots, drawing back and leaping forward. Andy dug into the roots with his axe, scarcely able to brush the dog aside, and his tool struck some hard metal surface. Philadelphia turned away, ready now to go with her burden, to prove her indifference to anything he might find in the field, but she saw the dog leaping and barking about the ruined stump as she went evenly toward the fence and made ready to climb. Andy cried out with a great word of oath or imprecation and he dug into the stump with hurried blows, trying to push the dog aside.

"It's a pot of gold," he said, his voice hoarse with confused pleasure and distress. Without ceasing to hack at the root-wood he called toward Philadelphia, "A pot! It must be money! What else?"

Philadelphia came back then, carrying her burden, and she stood deridingly by, ready to laugh when the object came to hand, storing her laughter. "An old plow iron," she said. "Somebody's old broken plow."

The axe broke away the rotting roots and parted the earth, letting the iron out. It was indeed a vessel. Andy freed a rusty handle and broke the vessel from the hard earth that packed it. He tore the stump completely and made an entire wreck of it. He called on Philadelphia for help, and she dropped her firing and tugged with him at the vessel. It came free at last and they raised it to the ground and broke away the clods. Under their hands stood a small iron pot, a cooking vessel of average size. It was covered over with an iron lid that was cemented into place by the clay, but Andy pried it away with his axe. Inside were gold and silver coins, tarnished with disuse, but clear to see in the bright light. As Philadelphia looked at them they swam in a dim fog of unbelief, stared out of view and scarcely accepted, but Andy made broken speeches of prayer and good feeling, swearing that he had never seen the like of this and naming God with praise, naming his own good luck with admiration.

"Philly," he said, "we are a rich man and woman now. We're rich beyond anything we ever dreamed. I got no idea how rich we might be."

Philadelphia could not believe. "It might get away," she said. She could scarcely make her voice carry the unwilling words to her mouth, and her throat set a hard barrier across the way, but she let the words out, "It'll get away afore you know."

"Take a hold," he said. They carried it to the fence and lifted it over. A hot wind seemed to blow through the bright sunlight, and the journey to the fence seemed long and full of peril. Beyond the fence Andy flung Philadelphia's apron over the pot and left her to guard it while he went back to the stump where he took away the broken wood and

looked into the hole for more tokens, but he found none and, having dug the earth about the stump until it fell into clods, he closed the hole he had made. He went back then to the treasure and they stopped again to talk of the wonder they had found and to ask each other what they had best do with it and how it came to them and whose it might have been in the beginning. Andy had inherited the land from his father, who had inherited it in turn; but he could not remember that there had ever been any story of lost money in his family.

"My pap was a well-doen man," he said, standing over the pot, "in nobody's debt as ever I heard. But he wasn't a man to put by money in a kettle. He'd set store by a bank if he had money to save. Bless God, did you ever hear tell of a man had so much luck?"

The two of them were required to carry the kettle. At the house they spread the money on the floor and counted the coins. These were gold and silver pieces of American coinage, all bearing dates earlier than 1860. When the pieces were counted the sum was found to be something above nineteen hundred dollars. Andy laid the coins in rows, kind beside kind, and he arranged them in graduated array or he rallied them in even files, counting them again, and his breath became short and quick with passion as he made the sum mount. Philadelphia saw new manners spread over him, and she heard new joys surge up in his voice. He talked of what he would do with the treasure, or he fitted it back into the pot and knew again the joy of finding it, a cat recapturing its mouse. Will o' the wisp money lay on their floor to be counted over, to be realized again and again. Elusive gold had come to them out of an old stump. Andy became the person she had held in mind as the man to whom she had been wedded for thirty years, the person who arose within to answer her despairing question, "Did I marry a lout, a poor miser of a skinflint named Andy?" He became the reply; he became Mr. Blair.

"Somebody buried this enduren the war," Andy said, half whispering, "Civil War times, and somebody buried the pot when that tree was a sprout and I dug it outen a hickory stump."

"Your pappy never once judged there was a kettle of money buried on his old worn-out field, did he? You don't reckon it ever belonged to your old granddaddy, do you?"

Andy shook his head and turned back to finger the money. "These-here coins all got inside this pot before war times. Many is the time my pap, he plowed that field and set his feet down in two feet of this-here money. Pap as poor as Job's own turkey all his enduren life. The man that owned the pot as likely as not was killed in the war. I am undoubtedly a master hand to have good luck. Did ever you see such luck, Philly?"

"What'll you buy with the money?" Philly asked. "What could we buy to show the world we found a pot of gold and silver?"

"I always was a master hand to find things," Andy said. "Good luck seems to come my way. I'm the best off man in these parts, as apt as not, right now."

"A new roof to the house, maybe," Philly said. "A new roof on the hen-house. The old one leaks as bad as any roof I ever did see. The hens, they see a right hard time in a wet season."

"And now I'm a well-doen man, as well-doen as e'er other man on Elk Run, take all as they come."

"I'll tell you what I'd like to get, outen the pot of money, Andy," Philly said, in her mind speaking to Mr. Blair, "a little something for Imogene. My own cousin's girl-baby she was, and look what a life she leads with her pap and those boys, her brothers, as close a set as ever you did see. Too stingy to let Imogene marry Giles Wilson."

She began to think of a wedding for Imogene, a bountiful supper and people at hand. She had come into a strange

world, and all her fiber seemed to be touching strangeness. The seat on which she rested seemed to bear her up in a strange way, and she remembered the summer cabbage still standing uncooked on the stove. The morning had crawled strangely past noon, no dinner being set on the table. She decided swiftly that she would give Imogene a wedding.

"We'll give Imogene a wedden," she said. "A big wedden with fried oysters, maybe, from town. I always think it's nice to have a wedden if a couple marry. Weddens are so pleasant. I just love weddens."

"A master hand to have luck, I always was," Andy followed his own. "The only man on Elk Creek that's not in debt, bad crop years no matter, but borrow money I would not. I says 'I'll starve first.'"

"And about near starve we did," Philly said out of the strangeness of the day, looking backward. "I recall days we had ne'er a thing but mush bread to eat."

"And now I'm the best off man in these parts. Did ever you hear of another had my luck, up and down this-here creek?"

"It's a fine thing to find in a stump," she said. "It'll buy us . . . what'll it buy us, Andy Blair?"

"It's a fine thing for a man to find on his land. What other man did you ever know found a kettle of gold and silver in his cornfield? I always was a lucky man. I'll keep the money inside the pot for a spell. I recollect I heard Lester Rudd say once, 'Andy Blair has always got all the luck.' You recollect times you've heard that said? I always was favored a heap. I don't know what 'tis about me draws all the luck my way."

"I never see so much luck you had afore this," Philadelphia said. She sat down toward the doorway and began to look scornfully at his past, searching it for good fortune. She held it up in jointed, terse sentences and broke it into fragments, casting each aside as it was frayed, leaving little of which a man might boast. "Recollect the time you spilled the corn in the creek?" she said. "Spilled a whole wagon load in swollen flood water." A poor shred of a man was left, clothed only in scorn. "Recollect the time a traveler greened you plumb out of your work nag?" Good luck stood far apart from Andy then, and she drove it farther recounting his ill favor. "What'll you buy with the money?" she asked.

"I'll keep it inside the pot for a spell," he answered. "It's a fair sight to see in the pot and a surprise to your eye every time you cast it that way. We'll keep it in the pot until we tell all the neighbors what we found and let all have a look."

"We'll have a surprise party and invite in Callie and Ed Sims and Effie and show them what a fortune we found against a stump in the cornfield. Callie will be plumb beside herself to know what the surprise is." She thought then to hurry the money out of the pot, to have all their neighbors in to view it at one time. Andy took pleasure in the thought of a public announcement, and pleasure restored him, strengthening his pride again.

"And old Hez Turner," he said. "Won't he be in a fidget to know what's to tell? Sing and pray over it, if you don't watch."

"Old Hez, he'll turn the surprise party into a chance to pray and preach. Maybe we better not invite old Hez. We won't. Church is the place to preach and pray in, but the churches won't let old Hez come in to preach."

"We'll leave old Hez out," Andy said. "Let him find out the good news from some that came. He'd be sure to preach and pray right over the kettle iffen he's let."

"We won't say what the surprise party is about. We'll just say there is a surprise and won't they like to come and see for themselves."

"That's what. We won't name the surprise. We'll just say come and see. It'll be a surprise then for a fact."

"I don't reckon a kettle full of money would ever enter in e'er head to be named, of all the lot we'd invite here. Do you reckon e'er a one would ever think to name a pot of money?"

"I wouldn't trust Callie to handle the money too freely. Callie has right light fingers sometimes. I wouldn't trust Callie too far. I never heard it said Callie stole anything, but I always took notice her fingers are light."

"Callie can make black appear white, with her smooth tongue. I wouldn't trust Callie too far with a kettle of gold that was mine."

"I'll let it be known I already counted the pieces," Andy said, taking caution, "and let it be reported I know how many are in the pot. Iffen any is gone we can search all the women before they go out."

"We better not say where we found it," Philadelphia said, becoming cautious too. "We'll say we dug it up but we won't show the place."

"I'm more uneasy," Andy said, "they might take the money outen the pot whilst we're not by to see. We can't stand by all day and watch the kettle. What would we do enduren the time we want to go out doors?"

"We'll give a prize to the one that can name what the surprise is. We'll give one piece of silver to whoever can guess the surprise before we bring it out to show. Then we won't bring it out before everybody is about ready to start for home."

"But don't you give a hint, Philly, of what it is. Callie is so before-handed she'd guess what 'tis, and you'd help her out, like you always do when there's something to guess."

"And then we'll afterwards give Imogene a wedden. I'd like a heap to see Imogene marry with a big supper."

"After the surprise is over," Andy said. "One at a time is all I can hold in head. Afterward, why maybe we might favor Imogene a little, for a fact we might."

They considered places in which to hide the kettle, trying several before they were satisfied with a place. Down inside the organ it seemed safe, shut away into the dusty cabinet among the reeds and bellows pipes, but Andy distrusted the organ, fearing that it might give forth some revealing whine or sigh of cramped distress, for the money pot crowded into the inner part of the instrument. Taken from the organ, it was placed in the chimney, hung well above the line of vision, the hearth being without fire now that the weather was warm, and it stayed there one night, but uneasiness followed it there and it was placed in the little cubbyhole in the room upstairs. They rubbed the coins until they shone, scouring them with wood ashes, a long process that required the whole of a day.

On the second day Imogene came tapping on the door and calling from without. She was a large strong girl of twenty-four, strengthened and gentled by much hard work.

"I walked over to the store to take the cream," she said. "I just stopped by. I got to get back in time to milk three cows against Pap and the boys quit work." She was a pleasant girl, laughing a great deal. She laughed at the cows and the work and the boys, and she laughed again when she told about the hens and about the cream. Her moist face shone in the dim light of Philly's room, and she rocked brightly to and fro, having a holiday out of the old rocking chair, out of her short free afternoon.

"See Giles Wilson to-day?" Philly asked.

"Go on, Cousin Philly," Imogene said, laughing again.

"I bet you see Giles afore you go much further. Whyn't you marry Giles. Run off from your pap and do what you're a mind to. Let your old pap, old man Cundy, marry again and bring a woman there. Iffen you run off he'll find somebody right off, you'll see.

He's too easy-goen to stir out and find himself a wife. There's a plenty would jump at the chance, good hard-worken women too."

Imogene laughed at this idea, but when she stopped her laughter Philly saw that there were tears in her eyes. She laughed again to make a channel for the waters of her eyes, and then she said that her father wouldn't let Giles Wilson come on the place and that she would never see Giles any more, she supposed.

"He owns a farm. What's to hinder?" Philly talked fast and repeated her admonitions. "You do like I say. As well work in Giles Wilson's kitchen as in old Sam Cundy's and better. Giles, he's close, but he's thrifty and a man is bound to be close in these hard times. You run off and marry Giles Wilson and I'll give you a wedden with oysters from town, and invite everybody you're a mind to. Candy and oranges. I'm your mother's own cousin. What's to hinder?"

There was an argument, both speaking at one time. Imogene laughed a good deal, her plump white face and moist hands deeply agitated. "Oh, Cousin Philly," she said. She could not see how Philly could afford a wedding for her. Philly needed a dress, she said. Where would all the money come from? It would cost twenty dollars or perhaps more. She laughed faintly at the thought of twenty dollars spent on foolishness and gave up the wedding as impossible.

"You run off with your clothes some day next week and you just leave the rest to me," Philly said. "There's plenty in the way of money. I always favored you above all my cousins and I'm a mind to see you settled in life. One day the last of next week."

"Iffen the cream happens to turn that day I couldn't come," Imogene said. "I never can tell what day the cream will turn."

"Let the cream turn again," Philly made the plans swiftly. "Let it turn." She promised a wedding with oysters and cake, a lavish promise.

"Giles Wilson, when he stops by our house, we don't talk about to marry. It's little he ever says nohow," Imogene said.

"He means marry, no matter what he talks. I know by the look on a man. What does he talk about?"

"Oh, he sits in his chair a spell and by and by he'll say three bad crop years hand-runnen, it's as much as a man can stand, and then he'll say the corn looks pretty this week and wasn't that a fine rain we had yesterday? Then he'll say he's two thousand dollars in debt on the place, but, come a good crop year and he'll be able to pay off five hundred dollars. Says then he'll be only fifteen hundred in debt."

"When a man talks like that he means what he says." Philadelphia nodded her head to convince Imogene of what she saw in the report. "When a man talks about how much he owes it's a good sign. Nowadays a man has got to go in debt to own land and get on in the world. It's a sign. You run off with your clothes like I said, one day last part of next week, and come here. Oysters from town. Oranges."

"I don't know what you mean. A plenty of money? I never yet knew you, Cousin Philly, to tell what wasn't gospel." Imogene was puzzled out of all laughter but she rocked swiftly in the few minutes left of her holiday.

"I can't tell you how it'll be, but it'll happen." Philly wanted to make all secure before Imogene left. "You trust all to me. A dress iffen you haven't got what you need. Maybe I sold my little bull calf to Mabley and Grimes for a big price. Maybe my hens are in a fine way, fifty eggs a day."

Imogene went away laughing, confused and distrustful of what she heard. Philly watched her from the door and waved to her when she turned back once before she entered a field, for she took a short cut across the farms to her father's place. In the center of the field she was

met by Giles Wilson and they went outward together.

Philadelphia visited three houses, inviting people to come to the surprise party, and on the highroad she asked several that she met. "I have invited enough," she said as she passed homeward after a visit to the hamlet, having visited the store and invited all that she met there. "I'll not invite e'er other person," she said, and she remembered a woman's voice saying, "Mr. Blair invited me." She thought happily of Mr. Blair, giving him respect in her mind, giving him obedience. She had spoken of him with praise at the store when a woman said, "I expect Mr. Blair will be right put-out when he knows a party will be at his house. A man-person hasn't hardly got time for parties, seems, and all the expense and wear on your things." The speech had erected Mr. Blair into a fine myth and thence into a fine reality. "Mr. Blair is different from most," Philly had said. "He never was a hand to blame me iffen I take it in head to have a party, or anything else I might have a fancy for."

The kettle of bright money in the loft arose before her as a bright blossom coming to flower anew each instant. Her heart leaped in its beat for joy, and a joy at foretelling the envy of the people when they knew of the good fortune quickened her steps. She was avid for more joy, for more envy. Mr. Blair sat in the house during her absence, his eyes on the chest that guarded their money hoard. She had invited Callie Jones and Robbie May Willett and had told them to bring all their relatives. She had invited Bonnie White. She had heard Andy inviting Giles Wilson and she herself had sent a message to Imogene. Coming through the gate from the lane, she encountered Andy at the house door speaking to someone who had come on an errand, "And iffen you see Hez Turner tell him to come."

"I thought you didn't favor to invite Hez," Philly said as she came through the door.

"Let all come," Andy said with a great pride. "Show favors to none. Iffen Hez Turner wants to see my surprise I am not the man to mistreat a neighbor."

"Preach and pray over the pot, and maybe convert somebody to his way," Philly said, "but no matter."

A day passed over them, the hours winding slowly around the clock. Andy was unable to hold his hands on the plow with any steadiness. Philly saw him wandering up and down the farm without employment, and at noon he broke his food into bits which he left uneaten while he expressed distrust and displeasure at one thing and another. The people of the neighborhood were a gossipy set, he said, and not a truth-telling set either. He told a story which put a sinister character on Rudd, his neighbor. He had seen a man hiding in the woods, he said, and he had seen strange footmarks in the soft loam of the cow pen. After the noon meal he went above to the upper room and he found a more secret hiding place for the money. He went back and forth on the stairs through the afternoon, his mind a tumult of bolts and keys.

The shadows of the trees began to lengthen and the summer evening gathered, the evening of the party having come. Andy milked the cow early, scarcely waiting for the sunlight to pass from the house wall. Philly threw the hens a hasty supper of corn. Fear had replaced Andy's delight in his treasure, and as he milked the cow his head was lifted now and then to watch the lane that came toward the house. He scarcely drew his share of the milk, yielding to the calf in his distress. He passed Philly in his hurry to regain the house and he said to her:

"I saw fresh footprints behind the barn. It's my belief, Philly, this house, it's watched. That's my belief."

"Watched how?" Philly asked.

"It comes to my mind we'd better not show the kettle of money to-night. We can name what the surprise is but we better not bring it out to show. I wouldn't trust all that gang that's to be here. I saw Lester Rudd outside awhile back and he says the whole Elk Creek Country is a-comen here to-night."

"Is the cow dry you can't get more'n a pint outen her? What manner of way is that to treat a cow? I wouldn't trust that-there gang neither."

"It comes to my mind we'd best not show the kettle. We best hide it deeper and not let e'er one see."

"Well, you better hide quick if you expect, Andy, to find a safe place before they come. Callie always was a beforehand person and she'll be here soon now."

"Oh, what made us invite all that riffraff here?" Andy cried out. "No place inside the house will be safe once it's known there's a kettle of money. Roam all over the house they will and find anything you might have put by."

He listened, turning his ear toward the lane, as if he might hear the tramp of people coming. He looked to Philly for assistance and cursed at his bad luck, blaming Philly for the ill-advised party which was at hand. "I'm a mind to take the kettle and run off and hide myself, but it's a heavy load to carry."

"We could bury it," Philly said. "We could bury it somewhere until morning."

"Yes, we could bury it, but where? I wouldn't trust the spot it was buried in to be out of my sight, not with the whole of that gang on the place. Talk quick and tell me where we could bury it."

"Oh, we could bury it under the floor. Under the house then. Oh, we could bury it under the hearthstone."

Andy went quickly to get his axe and his spade. He worked quickly, biting at his cheeks in his misery of mind, stopping to listen to the tramp of feet he could hear coming over the hills, over the distant roadways. He pried up a large gray stone of the hearth, using his pick, and he laid the stone aside on the floor, finding it heavy to move. Then he dug into the hard-pounded clay that lay beneath, earth that had never before been disturbed, and Philly brought a basket to take away the clay which was lifted from the place. When he had made a hole of the size he had well in mind he went above stairs and brought the treasure vessel and set it securely into the hole, covering it over with a napkin. When he had replaced the stone he made it fit to the place as if it had never been lifted, but it was not so tight as formerly, being cradled now in new-laid soil. He carried the basket of unused clay to the garden and emptied it there, and as he returned he called to Philly to hurry, saying that he heard steps now surely.

"Harken to me," he said, half in threat, his finger lifted in Philly's face. "Ne'er a word is to be said that the surprise is a kettle of money. You hear? Say not a word about the pot. Ne'er a word."

"What will we name for the surprise?" Philly asked, fearfully. "We have got to have a surprise, now we've promised one. What surprise will we name?"

"Ne'er a word about money," he said. "You hear what I say."

Philly was hushed into complete obedience, feeling the force of a determined man, Mr. Blair, whose finger beat at the air just beyond her face. "Mr. Blair ever was a strong-minded man," she whispered, and she thrust the comb through her hair to make ready for the company. Through the dim window she saw a young man waiting in the field just beyond the fence, keeping apart among the bushes. She had never seen this strange person, but she remembered what Andy had said of strange footmarks about the barn. A curious man was walking about under the trees outside and a pot of money was hidden under the hearthstone. She could scarcely add these facts together to make them yield a sum. She put on her best dress

quickly, whispering to herself. The whole countryside was coming to view their surprise, and they had none to reveal. She longed momentarily for her old-time unconsciousness and ease, for the day when a hidden pot of money had never yet come into her thought.

"I hear steps, Mr. Blair," she called out. She was fastening her dress at the throat. There were many voices at the door.

II

Turning back to a day a week earlier, the terrifying footsteps that had knocked upon Philly's ears and distressed Andy's peace of mind by making footprints about the barn, were then plodding happily down a field of grass. This was a genesis. Ben Shepherd, a boy of sixteen, lonely and full of contemplation, came through the tangled herbs and followed the droop of the land until it sank to the gorge about Elk Creek. He looked at the creek in the channel below him, the green bank and the high field beyond. He eased himself of his roll, having walked far. From some distant place he heard the slow lilt of a farm bell and then another in a remote and unrelated key. The country seemed dissevered, the parts unrelated, the high thin note of the last bell having no quality with the flat metallic gonging of the first, none with the deeply rutted creek, none with the women he had seen back at the low hamlet beyond two hills trading farm stuff. He decided to stay in this region, to lodge himself under an overhanging rock.

During the night a rain fell and at morning the water of the creek ran tawny. Seeing ripe berries floating on the brink, Ben went up the stream to find the berry bushes.

He walked through an old pasture among the uplands. Hidden in a tangled thicket, he looked out on a farm where a tall man worked over a fence, the sound of the hammer, as it pounded the staples, coming amplified across a small hollow. The man was a wonder of patches, of sewed-up kinds of cloth fitted neatly together, his bulging rheumatic knees being sewed, as it were, into fitted pockets of cloth. A woman moved about near the man, and a dog lay on the ground not far away. Ben viewed this scene through a small field glass he carried, himself well hidden among the bushes. As he worked, the man praised himself continually as a skilled mender of fences, making pleased comments upon the work of his hammer, but he sent a curse after his tool if any part of the fencing went wrong.

"I reckon you're not a hungry man," the woman spoke out, her words beating sharply out of the hill.

The woman was small and quick, impatient of the patched man, but he worked at the fence until he had worn her to apathetic submission. Then he went over the fence he had mended into a cornfield beyond, and he began to hack at an old stump, making firewood in his cornfield. The dog, a great brown hound, went back and forth from the man to the woman, and when she began to gather the wood into her apron the dog lay a moment on the ground, but it leaped then suddenly to the stump and barked, clawing at the disturbed earth. The woman called the man Andy and, knowing by what name the patched and profane man would be called, Ben settled the name upon him and listened carefully to hear some name by which to know the woman.

"What's taken the dog?" Andy asked. "I never see the dog in such a swivet before."

The woman turned away, her apron full of the cut wood. The dog was beautiful, leaping about the stump, making quick arcs through the air, crouching and springing over the torn earth of the cornfield, trampling the corn. He barked a wild, quick, short laughter, imploring the man, imploring the axe. Ben climbed an oak, merged with the dark gray and brown of the trunk, his clothes being brown. He clung to the trunk, catching at snarled boughs, com-

ing finally to a higher place where he settled himself to a crotch, keeping behind foliage and limbs. He could see now the wreckage of the stump and with his glass he could see the parted earth. The man seemed disconnected with the earth before which he moved, his axe sharply divided from the horizon against which it leaped, himself out of partnership with the brown soil or the green corn. He lashed great strokes into the broken stump. By the time Ben had made himself fast to the limb of the oak, Andy had torn the stump well apart, half fighting now with the dog. His disturbed cries mingled with his oaths and with the bark of the dog and were the one point at which he touched the earth. Then his words came clear, sharply cut before the hill, and he paused an instant.

"It's a pot of gold." These crisp words lay in a said phrase, and the axe leaped into its business again. Without ceasing to dig he called out again and again now, "Philly, a pot of money. Gold! A pot, I say!"

The woman came back, holding the wood in her apron, her words, "Plow iron . . . broken plow . . ." coming in a flat stratum of sound across from the hill. Andy cuffed the dog and pushed it aside, and the two actors in the scene, Andy and the woman he had called Philly, leaned together over the dug place, both pulling at some object that lay under the ground, their bodies bent and their strength set against the earth. Ben thought of bent figures in well-known prints, gleaners; and here they were gleaning gold. The earth yielded under their force, and some object came out of the ground, pulled forward by their gleaning hands. They were hovering over the matter as ants over a sweet sop, and they talked together, making quick signs with their hands, breaking away the clinging clay. Ben saw the object over which they were bent, all of it amplified by his glass. Their hands were large over the vessel they had unearthed and their fingers bent over a lid that soon broke away from the pot. Their astonishment and fear mingled a moment and stood to the fore, annihilating their pleasure. Philly wept and beat her hands together, and the man talked in low, hoarse words that were lost in passing across the hollow. The woman's apron blew aside, and there was money in the vessel. The man was crying, beating his hands, and the woman looked fearfully about as if she suspected some watcher of the scene. The man then took up the axe and dug madly into the hole, searching for more treasure, but nothing more came to view. The dog was indifferent now, having wandered away.

Andy and Philly went, taking their pot of gold or whatever coin it was. They carried it to the fence and lifted it over into the pasture and Andy flung the apron over it while he went back once again to search the cavity.

They were gone, the two of them carrying the pot between them, staggering under the heavy load. They would set it down now and then and face each other, talking, making gestures, laughing together. At last they sank into the low-lying droop of the pasture and went beyond the vision of the oak. A house, stained brown by the weather, arose out of the curve of a hill down the way they had gone.

(To Be Continued)

OFFICIALISM AND LAWLESSNESS

BY ALBERT JAY NOCK

ONE of our ablest lawyers, Mr. James Coolidge Carter, some years ago raised the question, What is Law? and called attention to its immense difficulty. Mr. Brand Whitlock, then mayor of Toledo, brought it up again about twenty years ago in a little monograph that never got half the attention it deserved, called, *The Administration of Law in Cities*. Both these eminent men gave the question up as unanswerable, and their discussion of the problems involved in it is one of our neglected classics. Perhaps the most useful thing that a publisher could do to-day, when the subject of law and lawlessness is so much in the public mind, would be to reprint Mr. Carter's lecture and Mr. Whitlock's essay together in a small volume and circulate it.

For when Mr. Hoover, Mr. Taft, Senator Capper, and others of our representative men undertake to reprove us for lawbreaking, their complaints logically run back to this question. The average man's instinct knows that when Mr. Hoover talks about lawbreaking he really means statute-breaking. Anyone can tell offhand what a statute is. It is anything that certain elected persons have written down on a piece of paper, and another elected person has signed. But is a statute *per se* a law? I remember a statute passed in one of our Middle States, I believe, to the effect that two trains approaching an intersection must both come to a full stop, and neither may start again until the other has passed! Is that a law? The instinct of the average man promptly says it is not, and the judgment of instinct is borne out in the fact that no such statute is obeyed, can be obeyed, or has any power to get itself obeyed. But the moment this is acknowledged, the moment it is admitted that private judgment has any play whatever in the premises, that moment there is introduced the whole vast question, *What is law?*

Golden Rule Jones, Mr. Whitlock's predecessor as mayor of Toledo, probably did as well as anyone could with the baffling problem of defining law when he said that "law in the United States is anything that the people will back up." Emerson also observed to the same effect that "The law is only a memorandum." The Constitution is officially, as Mr. Justice Harlan was given so often to declaring it, "the fundamental law of the land." But are the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments actually law? Obviously they are not, and no one would be as much embarrassed by a serious appeal to them as those whose sworn duty it is to enforce them. From the Constitution down to the municipal ordinances of one-horse towns, we have a mass of enactments, many of them practicable enough and some of them rather sensible, that somehow fail of being actual laws; they are not obeyed or enforced or even ever heard of, and they apparently have no power to rescue themselves from this extreme desuetude. Whichever way one looks at it, there seems a most important essential difference between a law and a statute; between a law and an ordinance; even between a law and a Constitutional provision.

II

Average human instinct, however, without being able to define this difference, is fully aware that it exists; and that is the reason why Mr. Hoover's recent admonitions fell so largely on deaf ears. Mr. Hoover implied that anything good, bad or indifferent, practicable or impracticable that a legislature enacts and that an executive signs is a law; whereas we all know that it may be, and very often is, nothing of the kind. Thomas Jefferson spoke straight from the average man's instinct when he said that the legislative enactments known as the Alien and Sedition Acts had no more effective force of law, and should have no more, "than if Congress had commanded us all to fall down and worship a golden image." We all know furthermore that this instinct, though we may not be able to make a satisfactory intellectual interpretation of it, is logically sound. Once admit Mr. Hoover's theory and, as Jefferson's comparison shows, one is led straight to the acme of absurdity. One need not veer off into any abstract questions concerning the rights of man and the corresponding limitations which those rights put upon lawmaking bodies. It is enough to observe with Jefferson that carrying Mr. Hoover's idea of the nature of law by a short step towards its logical extreme shows it to be utterly preposterous.

Mr. Hoover's pronouncement also, I regret to say, causes him to raise other implications which, while not more culpable than the foregoing, are more directly offensive to large numbers of our citizenry. Those who assume with Mr. Hoover that a statute and a law are one and the same are prone, in their public utterances, to lump all "lawbreakers" together under a general and indiscriminate reprehension, and to regard them as beings who not only ought to be, but who in their hearts really are, ashamed of themselves. Nothing is farther from the truth; and this misapprehension shows how directly intellectual error may lead to a moral error of the first magnitude. If those who thus lecture us for our disregard of law would look into the question of what law is and what it is not, and would study the operation of fundamental human instinct on that question, they would save themselves from doing their fellow-citizens considerable injustice. In the exercise of private judgment against Mr. Hoover's theory of law, average human instinct is conscious not only of its own intellectual integrity but of its moral integrity as well; and no amount of expostulation or abuse—I can call it by no fairer word—will alter its consciousness.

The testimony of instinct comes out negatively, in the degree of respect paid to public servants according as their duties lie mainly with enactments that the common conscience of mankind does not support. Thus the police of London, who are very little occupied with the mere *malum prohibitum*, are more highly respected than those of our cities. Before prohibition everyone thought well of our Coast Guard, but respect for that useful body has decreased notably in the last ten years. The feeling towards agents of the prohibition service amounts to repugnance. One is struck by the way most people take the news that a prohibition agent has been killed in action. They behave at best with indifference; often as if they thought he were well out of the way. Yet when a policeman dies trying to vindicate the law against homicide or burglary the same people admire his heroism.

Human nature can neither be preached nor bullied out of assent to this testimony of instinct, and self-respecting human nature resents the attempt to do either. I confess I cannot understand what has happened to the American people's sense of dignity, that they permit their public servants to address them in the tone that many of these latter have lately chosen to employ. It would seem to me most competent to

remind our officials in no uncertain terms that in raising implications against all statute-breakers they are committing an intolerable impertinence. We are all statute-breakers, every man, woman, and child in the land; and the discrimination that we instinctively exercise towards enactments which do not command the common conscience of mankind, or concerning which the common conscience is neutral, is not attended by the slightest consciousness of wrongdoing. On the contrary we know that fundamental human instincts are sound and trustworthy, as Thomas Jefferson declared them to be, and that no one has the right to arraign our allegiance to them as immoral.

Does anyone actually presume to intimate that anywhere in the United States a man who walks two miles for pleasure on Sunday, or plays tennis, or buys a newspaper, or kisses his wife is acting from a defective moral sense? If not, just where in the category of prohibited things does the moral sense begin to show defect? One may always use oneself for purposes of illustration in cases where such service might be disagreeable, so I may say I am a statute-breaker and have been one all my life. I have bought cigarettes in Kansas—very bad ones—and in other States where their sale was forbidden. But for the fact that I am no drinker, I dare say I should be evading the inconvenience of prohibition. My path through life is strewn with the wreckage of enactments contemplating not only trivial matters like these but also some that are more serious. But I cannot recall an instance of this kind where my moral sense puts in any testimony against me or where the offense is one that I should hesitate about repeating. In all this I believe I stand with every man-jack of my fellow-citizens. Their offenses may not be the same as mine, but they are of the same order; they are offenses that concern some form of the mere *malum prohibitum*, about which the normal moral sense is silent. Moreover, if all the courts in the country, and all the executives from President to poundmaster, should undertake to tell me that my moral sense is defective, their word would make no more impression on me than water on a duck's back; and in this, too, I believe I have every one of my fellow-citizens with me. It is conceivable that even a prohibitionist might be as sincerely impenitent about Sunday golf or ice cream, or failing to declare an extra box of cigars, or about crowding the tax regulations a little as I should be about buying a drink if I wanted one. Somewhere or other we all depart from the strict letter of the law, and so far are we from any sense of crime or sin that in some instances, perhaps, we secretly glory in our shame, and would glory in it openly but for certain practical inconveniences that might ensue.

Such is the force of man's private judgment, and whenever a statute has been set up in opposition to it, the statute has always gone by the board. This sort of thing has been tried for hundreds of years, and never yet has it succeeded. Those who think it should succeed now in the case of prohibition have simply no idea of what it is that they antagonize.

III

Have our official monitors ever asked themselves where we should all be if we were not what they are pleased to call lawbreakers? What would become of the individual who is trying to live peaceably and decently under a bureaucracy if he were not a lawbreaker? He simply could not get on at all. The average man's instinct prompts him to a just sense of proportion in this matter; the trouble with our monitors is that they speak from the point of view of the doctrinaire or the job holder instead of that of the man in the street who has something to do that is worth doing and wants to get it done. One might say that a bureaucracy exists chiefly for the purpose of impeding a citizen in his

legitimate pursuits; and more often than not, the only way of resisting or evading its ignorant and routine-bound exactions is through "lawlessness." The citizen, therefore, takes that way whenever he can, and has the justification of a sound instinct in so doing.

Let me give an illustration or two to make this clear. This morning I undertook to mail the corrected proofs of a book to my publishers in New York, from the head post-office in a French border town. I proposed to send it by registered book-post at third-class rates, as I had every right to do. The clerk demurred, and called in the *controleur*, a sort of first mate of a French post-office, who glanced at the proofs, saw corrections made in handwriting, and said I should have to pay first-class rates, the difference being about a dollar and a quarter. He was an austere and fidgety person who would not listen to any appeal—no doubt he had never seen or heard of a proof-sheet in all his life; so I went back to my hotel, borrowed a copy of the postal regulations, returned to the post-office, looked up the head mogul, and fought the battle out with him to a successful issue. By this time the morning had gone.

Now, the point is that I needed that morning for something more important than a collision with the impenetrable stupidity of a bureaucracy. I needed it for urgent work that could not be delayed. Hence, if there had not been so many people around, I should have dealt with that *controleur* American fashion by quietly slipping him a few francs, and then gone away to resume my work in peace; nor would my conscience have been disturbed by that easy way of settling the matter. Yet I suppose that bribery is as serious a matter in French law as in ours. I could of course have yielded to the extortion and paid first-class postage, but that did not suit me. With me it was a case of millions for baksheesh, but not one sou for bureaucracy. Besides, the whole question of resistance or submission to the incursions of any bureaucracy comes in here. If one does not oppose them somehow, they increase and multiply beyond endurance. If one opposes them personally, it is a ruinous waste of time and energy. It is, therefore, a sound instinct which tells the average man that to exist at all comfortably under a bureaucracy and get anything done, he must on occasions walk after the counsels of the ungodly and stand in the way of sinners.

I remember a story, which may be apocryphal, told of Godkin, the redoubtable editor of the New York *Evening Post* thirty years ago. On his way home one evening he was met at his door by a policeman with some sort of official notice that something was wrong with his frontage; either the snow was not cleared according to rule, or the ash-barrels were out of place—some small matter like that. Instead of fooling away a couple of days over red tape, or perhaps appearing in court to answer for violating an ordinance, Godkin cleared up the matter on the spot by making two crimes out of one; he gave the policeman ten dollars, promised it should not happen again, and told him to forget it. Godkin was then engaged in a great newspaper campaign against municipal corruption, so when the story got around, as it somehow did, there was a great laugh over it. Yet according to the average man's instinct, that was the only sensible way to settle the matter. Godkin saved himself a deal of time and trouble, and so was satisfied. The policeman was satisfied. The court was one trivial case short on its crowded docket. The public, in whose interest the ordinance was framed, was satisfied because Godkin straightened up his ash-barrels. The only thing left unsatisfied was the interesting abstraction known as the majesty of the law. There seems no doubt that between Godkin and the policeman, the majesty of the law came off badly. But the average man usually cannot quite settle with himself just what the majesty of the

law amounts to. And yet the average man, confirmed and inveterate statute-buster though he be, is law-abiding; he is well-meaning and decent, though from the tone adopted by our moral monitors one might not suspect it. Show him a law that is really a law, something that measurably reflects the common conscience of mankind, and he is quite likely to obey it.

But a bureaucracy will not meet the public half way. Officialism, as Herbert Spencer pointed out years ago, is interested chiefly in strengthening itself, digging itself farther and farther in, and multiplying its encroachments on the rights, liberties, and consciences of the individual citizen. Anything like taking the public into its confidence is obviously inconsistent with this, and cannot be done. Therefore, in their comment on our lawlessness our official servants do not define, do not explain, do not reason: they merely tell us.

The instinct which warns us against this tendency of officialism is wholly sound. It testifies that this tendency should be resisted. A bureaucracy should be put in its place and kept there. The individual, acting alone, cannot do this. All he can do is to ward off from himself the evil incidence of officialism as best and as often as he may; and the only way he can do this is through an occasional discriminating exercise of "lawlessness."

IV

So much for the individual. Now, how can society collectively best withstand progressive incursions of officialism and keep a bureaucracy in its place. We are told, rightly enough, that the first thing, the indispensable thing, is strict attention. Without this nothing can be done. When Thomas Jefferson was representing our Government in Paris, he wrote Edward Carrington that "if once the people become inattentive to the public affairs, you and I and Congress and Assemblies, judges and governors, shall all become wolves. It seems to be the law of our general nature, in spite of individual exceptions." We have a saying which has degenerated into a kind of cliché, but is none the less true, that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. The mass of our public is supposed to fail in this vigilance and to have become extremely "inattentive to the public affairs," except around election time when the general interest bears something of a sporting character, hardly to be called very serious. This count against our people is probably true, but I do not make a point of it. I mention this commonplace only to bring in a question to which it gives rise.

Mere vigilance is worth very little unless the way is open for immediate and appropriate action upon the delinquency that vigilance discovers. What, then, is the use of vigilance against the encroachments of officialism under a political system which by its fundamental organization makes such action impossible? Here again the average man's instinct which prompts him to abstain from any political interest, unless for purposes of profit, seems to me a sound one. The utmost that our federal system permits is to sack a handful of job holders at the end of four years or seven years; under the system in other countries they can be turned out at any time and without notice. Some of our worst habitual offenders against the liberty and sovereignty of the people, indeed, are to all intents and purposes irremovable. They may be impeached, but as far back as Jefferson's time, impeachment, as he said, was "not even a scarecrow"; and we all know it is no more than that now. But turning a few job holders out at the end of a fixed term does nothing against bureaucracy and officialism or against their tendencies; these go on under the next regime of job holders just as they did under the last. Meanwhile, too, there is no competent mode of reprehension that society can collectively apply to a job holder for any insult to the people's dignity or any injury to their sovereignty. That is to

say, there is none unless society, like the individual, has recourse to lawlessness.

Collective lawlessness interested Mr. Jefferson and gained his calm and rather naïve approval. "I like a little rebellion now and then," he wrote one correspondent, and on the occasion of Shays's Rebellion he expressed his hope that the country would never go twenty years without one like it. Shays and his malcontents were not altogether wrong, he thought, but even if they were, the rebellion was probably a good thing on general principles. It showed that the people were alive to public concerns, and it also kept the ear of the job holder open to his master's voice. It is no disparagement to the Founding Fathers to say that being human, they were not omniscient in their foresight. Whatever their intentions may have been, they did actually construct a political system that puts officialism beyond the reach of any remedial or punitive collective action except violence; and Jefferson was thoroughly aware of it.

While I am entirely of Jefferson's mind in this matter, I am not now counselling a rebellion on any particular issue, or even counselling rebellion at all. When the official hue and cry about "lawlessness" started, it led me to contemplate the cancer of officialism in our body politic, and to wonder what could be done about it, first by the individual, and second, by society collectively; and I cannot see but that in both cases "lawlessness" is the only thing that will check its inroads.

I do not intend to speak particularly about the general issues arising out of prohibition, but one special issue serves very well just here for purposes of illustration. I remember my indignation and sense of outrage twenty years ago, in the time of State option, when some officers of a prohibition State boarded a train and cut open the suit-case of an innocent through-passenger, to search it for liquor. It seemed to me then that officialism had reached its limit of affront to the integrity and dignity of the public. Federal agents now, however, seem embarked on the policy—under instructions, mind you, set forth by officialism—of first shooting the suspect out of hand and searching his property afterwards. In a newspaper to-day I see an estimate that these murders run to an average of one every three days.

Now, under these circumstances, what recourse has the community? These assassinations are an immediate concern of the community, and are acutely felt to be such, since no innocent person can know when and under what circumstances he or she will be a victim. The community is as much concerned as it would be with any other mode of brigandage. But, in the premises, just what can it do?

The immediate agents can be indicted and tried; but, in the first place, this hardly suits the average sense of justice. These men are acting under orders and are responsible to their superiors. In the second place, officialism is all on their side, and the trial results in a formal vindication of officialism and not in actual justice. As for implicating their superiors in the issue, the thing is clearly impossible; the attempt would result only in a more spectacular vindication of officialism.

What then? Well, it is possible that the community thus outraged might spread the contagion of its dissent largely through the country. In that case it is again possible that at the end of a term of years we might retire a president to private life, and bounce out a camorra of senators, congressmen, and such. But this measure seems almost ludicrously inadequate and superficial when compared with the amount of effort and expense involved in bringing it about. When it is done, what has the country got? What has it ever got from this procedure? Besides, four years or seven years is a long time to wait for the popular will to become operative. Whether regarded as a measure of retributive justice or as a rebuke to officialism, this procedure seems alike incompe-

tent, and I believe that the natural instinct of the people regards it with extreme dissatisfaction. Yet I know of no other that can be either conceived or applied within the limits of a strict legality.

V

Although an American citizen, I live much abroad among a people who have their own faults and shortcomings, like the rest of us, and some considerable virtues. One of their virtues is an amazingly quick, passionate, almost vindictive resentment and resistance against the incursions of officialism. Individually and collectively they know their rights and are most jealous of them; otherwise in all their private relations, they are the most tolerant people that I ever had the good fortune to be among. Both these traits seem largely to have been born in them, and the course of their national history has accidentally been such as to foster both of them very powerfully. For years I have watched the continuous come-out of these traits with a fascinated interest.

Officialism, in a word, is restricted to a degree inconceivable by an American; and it is restricted by the one thing I know of that can restrict it, which is fear. Not fear of losing a job, but fear of losing continuity of the spinal column. Every official from the highest to the lowest, carries on under just that wholesome apprehension. He knows what he may do and may not do; bureaucracy knows how far it may go, and what will happen if it goes farther; and any motion, even the slightest, towards overstepping the line brings out a prompt reminder. A friend of mine who had had large experience in municipal government in America, once told the mayor of the European city I live in that he ought to turn a certain crowded thoroughfare into a one-way street. The mayor threw up his hands and said, "If I did that there would be a revolution!" He was right. That street is a one-way street now, but making it so was a matter of twelve years. The progress of a general traffic-control has been very slow and circumspect, almost block by block, with the people watching every move to decide whether it meant something really for their convenience or was a mere bureaucratic gesture. Whatever failings a critic might observe in this people's type of civilization, it has certainly realized all the advantages that come from never being "inattentive to the public affairs."

Consequently the outrages committed by officialism in America against the dignity and liberties of the public could no more take place here than they could take place in heaven. Supposing the impossible, let us suppose that a woman was shot here under circumstances like those of the prohibitionist raid on a private domicile in Illinois a few months ago. What would happen is that the political equivalents of Mr. Mellon and Mr. Lowman would be immediately eliminated. The people would waste no time on the actual raiders; their sound political instinct would lead them straight to the persons responsible. But nothing like this is ever necessary, because the people watch their job holders like cats and are always ready with some practical application of the principle *obsta principiis* in small matters as well as great. Nothing seems too small and trivial for them to resent, and on occasion the concern of the individual instantly becomes the concern of the community.

Some months ago, for instance, the Communists had been annoying the Socialists by organizing a series of petty strikes; and the mayor of the city that I live in put out a proclamation one morning prohibiting all public meetings and street-processions. The Socialists are politically very strong here, and the Mayor evidently had counted on this to enable him to "get by" with this proclamation so manifestly aimed at the weak Communist faction. But the prohibition lasted just four days. On the morning of the fifth day there was

another proclamation posted on the dead-walls, saying it was all off. Meanwhile there seemed to be as many parades and assemblages as usual, with the police maintaining a benevolent neutrality. Undoubtedly what happened was that about the second day, people of every political stripe began to drop into the Mayor's office to tell him that while he was all right as far as he went, they were noticing that the boys seemed to be getting sort of restless, and they were afraid the future looked a little dark for him unless he brisked up and did something.

Some time ago I watched a street fête in the poorest quarter of town until long after midnight, when two men started at fisticuffs in the middle of a side street. A couple of policemen happened along, and for some reason one of them tried to interfere. The men stopped fighting just long enough to set on the policeman, sent him spinning on his head ten feet away, and then at once resumed business. They were quite within their rights, and they knew it. They were not blocking traffic, for there was none; not disturbing anyone, for they were not noisy; not discommoding or injuring anyone, for what few people were around were on the sidewalk. These men were very poor and shabby; in America they would have had no chance at all. They would have been clubbed half to death and then probably "run in" on a charge of resisting an officer; and the bystanders would have let it go at that. Here, however, the incident ended when the policeman got up, brushed himself off, and rejoined his companion, who meanwhile had not stirred. If he had made an issue of it, he would have had to take on the whole population of the district, because, as I say, by every rule of reason and sense, he was "in wrong." If on the other hand he had been in any way justified by reason and sense, the populace would have been just as strongly on his side, as I have often seen it happen.

So it is not only in municipal or local affairs, but in national affairs; this spirit predominates everywhere. About two years ago there was a great demonstration in a northeastern province of the country; thousands of people marched all day, with brass bands, and speech-making of a most inflammatory type. The manifestation was headed by two canons of the cathedral and six university professors. They marched under a foreign flag, advocating the annexation of the province by a neighboring country. Well, by modern American standards, this was sedition of the most flagrant type, but nothing happened. The military were not called out, the ringleaders were not railroaded to Atlanta or maimed on the spot by the police; nothing at all was done about it. After all, if those people felt that way, they had every right to speak up about it. If they could get enough people in the province to feel the same way, and the neighboring country was content they had every right to obtain annexation. The right of secession is inalienable. "When in the course of human events it becomes necessary, etc."—how many times we have heard those noble words! But over here they really believe it and are ready to back up their belief, not only with their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor, but with the leg of a chair or whatever first comes handy. In this instance the demonstrators could not make enough people feel their way to carry the issue; but they had absolute and unlimited freedom to try, and so they were satisfied.

VI

The general doctrine that I am describing may be disparaged as terrorism; indeed, it may be very fairly called terrorism, provided one very important condition be kept in mind. It is as true, I believe, as ever Thomas Jefferson thought it was, that the only way the incursions of officialism can be withstood is by keeping the officials in a state of constant fear—not fear for their jobs,

but for their skins. I say, *constant* fear, not intermittent or occasional fear. If this be done, as it is in the country where I live, there are never any terroristic consequences, for things simply never get that far. The people among whom I live keep themselves continually framed up to hang somebody, no matter whom, from the head of the general government to the policeman on the beat. Officialism is constantly aware of this, and consequently no one is ever hanged. I never witnessed or heard of a single incident where a few well-chosen words did not immediately and satisfactorily produce results. The officials know the disposition of the people, know it is not to be trifled with, and never trifle with it. Only where the disposition of a people is either complaisant or "inattentive," or both, can officialism make any headway against their liberties.

After all, the thing stands to reason as well as to such experience as is furnished by the country where I live. Suppose Mr. Whalen knew to an absolute certainty that within twenty-four hours after his police had confiscated private medical records the citizenry would descend upon his office, would that peculiarly odious and outrageous raid on Mrs. Sanger's clinic have taken place? Never. Would a single prohibitionist assassination ever take place if Mr. Mellon and Mr. Lowman knew to a certainty that the day when it happened would be their official last? Never. Matters would never come within a thousand miles of such a thing. I am not contemplating occasional and sporadic outbursts of mob-rage caused by some exceptionally flagrant *démarche* of a bureaucracy. Officialism has no fear of those, for it can deal with them. I am speaking of a steady, considered and highly sensitive spirit of repression, which by coming out with promptness and force against the feeblest beginnings of officialism's attempts against the public's welfare and dignity, never needs be called on to resist any of its more daring and flagitious enterprises.

I see no conclusion but that Jeffersonian "lawlessness" affords communal rights and dignity, as well as the rights and dignity of the individual, their only recourse against officialism. Jefferson seems to have thought so, and I see no way whereby one can think otherwise. Moreover, for the community as well as the individual, the determination and delimitation of "lawlessness" runs straight back to the fundamental question, *What is law?*

Americans, searching for available recourse in what seems to me a most trying and humiliating situation, might well broach this fundamental question and demand a plain and thorough discussion of it; and demand especially that it be discussed by those who now so lightly undertake to reprehend them for their lawlessness.

SUSAN AND THE DOCTOR

A STORY

BY RUTH SUCKOW

SUSAN started going with the boys early. Too early. Her mother had died, and there was no one to look after her. Her father had affairs of his own on his hands.

Susan's escapades, from the time she was thirteen, had been a source of talk in the town where she lived. But they seemed all to have happened in a past that was now incredible. People had almost forgotten that she had once gone with Buddie Merton and Carl Flannigan and Chuck Myers and Pat Dougherty—her affair had been going on for so many years with the Doctor.

And it had obscured not only her relations to other men, but almost everything else about Susan. People did not think about the long and steady efficiency of her position in the Farmers Bank, where she had risen from clerk to assistant cashier, and where she was actually a stand-by. When they went into the bank, and up to Susan's little barred window, they did not see her—slim, shining-haired, immaculate—as the cashier who dealt out nickels and dimes and bills with swift, experienced, white fingers. They did not recall how her present security was due to herself alone. She had never depended upon her father for a living. She had never depended upon anyone. She had borrowed money and taken a business course and then asked old Henry Houghton for a place in the bank; and it was upon that first meager and grudging admission that she had lived and put money aside and paid for the always fashionable perfection of her tailored clothes and the smartness of her hats. They looked through the little window at her white hands and smooth hair, and thought:

"I wonder how her affair is coming on with the Doctor!"

Oh, yes! Susan was handy, and she was bright. She made some of those pretty clothes herself—knitted scarves when scarves were in fashion, and embroidered collar and cuff sets when they were the thing. She kept her two rooms and kitchenette at Mrs. Calverton's in exquisite order. Women did admit that. And there were men in town who said that no one in that bank knew as much about its business as Susan. But all that seemed irrelevant to the consistent interest of her love affair.

It obscured the rest of her life to Susan herself. There was never a moment when she was not aware of it. At the bank, when she was making up accounts with swift and practiced accuracy, it was there in her breast, something unsatisfied, an ache and a craving; it was there behind the businesslike rhythm of the adding machine; and when she sat at the big table in the back room where the sunshine lay slantwise in the morning its sweetness enveloped her in dreamy pain. She could never give herself up to the warmth of the sunshine. Her white fingers had to keep at work to ease the craving and subdue the thoughts that drew to their tight, inevitable center in her mind.

"Always at it!" old Tommy Munson,

wealthy farmer and nominal vice president, said to her jovially when he came into the bank.

He was the only person in town who thought of Susan as cashier and seemed never to have heard of her affair with the Doctor.

It was with her when she went out on the street at noon. She frowned at the outdoor brightness. Suppose the Doctor should come past! The possibility of it blinded her for a moment, with tense persistence of desire; and she would have liked—if she could have liked!—to stay in the shelter of the bank, where it was shaded and apart. She might be with Nita Allen, the stenographer; but her eyes could not be restrained from their restless, watching alertness. She must notice every car on the street. She must look down the narrowing vista to the building where the Doctor had his office on the fifth floor, and must strain for a brief and unsatisfying glimpse of the small and distant figure of a man who might be the Doctor himself coming out of the building. In Wessel's drugstore, where she had her tuna-fish sandwich and glass of malted milk at the shining new counter, she had to talk gaily and brightly, in the usual ironic repartee, with the crowded line of stenographers and young business men, above her restless preoccupation and the constant small wear of pain.

"Hello, Susan! How are you?"

"Fine."

"Where do you keep yourself these days?"

In the busy street of the growing town she felt almost a stranger—she, Susan, who had lived here all her life and knew every window display in every store! But her affair with the Doctor had set her apart from the rest of the town—from the old crowd, her own crowd: Elsie Adams, who was married and had two babies; Letha Grove, who lived with her parents and hadn't changed since high school days; Mary Wilson, who came back now and then from her work in Chicago. Susan seemed never to have known another man than the Doctor; and at times, when she heard in the drugstore the animated chatter about dances, she would wonder if she could actually *be* Susan—the one whom the boys used to fall over one another to ask to dances, who chose this one or that with imperious freedom, who was the most popular girl of her day.

She was tense and defiant in her loyalty—and the thing had been going on, how many years?—but all the same, her eyes could not meet the curious or carefully incurious eyes of older women, her mother's friends, whom she might pass on this street and who would ask her, "Well, Susan, how are you getting along?" The consciousness of her affair with the Doctor hung between them, clouding the old neighborly relationship. Mrs. Andrews had tried to "speak to her" once about it. She had talked about Susan's mother while Susan stood with head up and lips haughtily closed. But it made Susan dread the street.

When she went into the bank again she would sometimes stand for a moment, humiliated and hurt through every nerve, because this one thing must claim her whole being. The spirit of independence, upright and narrow, that lived in her slim body rebelled. She thought of the time when she used to say airily to Carl Flannigan, "No, I can't go anywhere—I've got to do some work for the bank"; and of the later days when, after one of those excitingly perilous meetings with Pat Dougherty, who was just getting his divorce, she used to go back to the bank, and think with cool exultancy, "Well, here I'm by myself!" She, Susan, who had always been so sure, imperious, efficient, cool . . .

"I won't stand this. It's got to end."

But then the far more torturing fear that it *might* end shot through her in pain.

But when she went home after work—home? well, back to Mrs. Calverton's—at half past five, through smoky twi-

lights of fall or the veiled tenderness of spring, resentful wonder would come over her again. Had there actually been a time when she was her own self, Susan, free and wild and belonging to herself; when she could walk swiftly through such a twilight, breathing the acrid smoke, or linger and lift her face to the damp spring air, with love left over for the little leaves and the tulips, with nothing to come between her and the night?

She went up the same gray-painted steps of the large, neat porch. She put her hand on the same bronze knob of the door. Inside, the house odor, orderly and slightly aging and remote, never quite that of home, enveloped her in dreariness. She could not stand the board that creaked on the stairs and the hot-water faucet that ran a meager and maddening trickle.

How could she endure this place a day longer? She had certainly never meant to spend all her life in a rooming house. Independence was all right. She wasn't going to have to ask anybody for things. But Susan had always planned, being methodical and worldly shrewd, that when the time came, when she was ready, she would marry and have a home of her own, the kind she wanted. And here she was, well along in the twenties, with nearly all the other girls in the crowd settled, and she still living in two rented rooms at Mrs. Calverton's! Sometimes it seemed as if her whole scheme of life were going astray.

But when she entered her room, with its waiting orderliness of cushions and reading lamp and cigarette trays placed here and there, the dreariness vanished. Her impatience sternly curbed itself. Mrs. Calverton was used to the whole thing. The Doctor could come, and she let them alone. A move—one little thing like that—and the whole perilous, precious status of the thing might be lost.

Besides, the Doctor would be here in a little while.

Susan went into the kitchenette. The shelves were filled with things of his own special choice—Mocha coffee, fig preserves, salted almonds. Susan saw these things, and they brought back the beloved and secret intimacy of a hundred little dinners. She used to love to put on her best clothes and go out to dinner with men, to the dining room of the Melrose, the most expensive place in town, where she would see people and be seen by them. But there was a painful kind of delight in giving up these old pleasures of hers—her own special pleasures. She wanted them again at times; but there was the same delight in sacrificing them to his demand for secrecy and seclusion.

Anyway, he would be here in a little while. She would be with him.

He came up the stairs, into the living room, into the doorway of the kitchenette. Susan felt the vital largeness of his presence, warming the whole place into life; although—with her old manner of cool concentration—she did not turn from her work at the small gas stove. His arms were around her, and she was drawn backward.

"Susan! Aren't you going to tell me you're glad to see me?"

Through his arms she felt the straining domination of his need.

The dinner was exciting and happy and cozy—one of their own little dinners, at the card table with the linen cloth that Susan had embroidered in her leisure time, with the favorite dishes she had kept from her own home, and with the orange candles and the green-glass candlesticks that he had brought her. The shades were down. Their voices were low, so that even Mrs. Calverton could not hear. He told her his professional troubles and leaned upon the cool practicality of her advice, even while he was demanding from her the sympathy that her pride would not seem to yield him. The old atmosphere of troubled splendor was about him, blinding her clear-sightedness, and forcing devotion, that was half maternal,

out of the independence she could not admit that she had lost.

And then, when dinner was over, he wouldn't permit her to wash the dishes, upset the precision of her routine to her anger and delight, and drew her to him.

But after he had left, Susan lay in her narrow bed aching and alone. Her tingling body was tense with resentment. No matter how they parted, her body was left tense and aching—for he went away, he left her alone, she could not stay warm and at ease in his arms and wake up beside him in the morning. She hated him.

Then she turned and tossed. Her sleep seemed always to be shallow and tense. She craved wildly to break away from him. Why must her own need be sacrificed to his? Her life was passing . . . But it was as if he had sown within her the seed of his trouble. She could not wrench it out of her. In the night, in the darkness, she could let her coolness be diffused with aching tenderness. This was the only way that it could be for him—so he thought; and she, Susan, was the only woman in town with courage to take him as he must be taken. She thrilled with pride of his largeness, handsomeness, and splendor; and she would rather have him secretly, equivocally hers than to have all of the common, tame little men whom the other girls had married. The straight and narrow loyalty that made her a standby in the bank held her to him in tense, undeviating devotion.

The affair had begun in quite a different way.

Susan, for the time being, was free of all her men. In disgust she had broken the last frayed end of her brief but hotly melodramatic "case" with Pat Dougherty. And she didn't want to go with anyone for a while. It seemed to her that she had tried nearly all the eligible men in this town, and that there was no interest in any of them. There wasn't a one whose silly devotion could make up for the loss of her position in the bank or who could give her anything that could surpass it.

"I'm hard-hearted," Susan said coolly and with a slightly malicious enjoyment of power, to the wistfully sentimental Letha Grove. "If I ever get married, I'll marry for money. I'll marry a man who can get more for me than I can get for myself. At present—I'll stay as I am."

In idleness and in revulsion from the extremely hot persistence of Pat Dougherty, Susan had looked up some of the old high-school crowd again. She took pleasure in going with Letha Grove and "the girls" to concerts and basket-ball games. There was in it a defiance of the men who admired her, and a challenge to them. Never had she enjoyed her work at the bank so much. She exulted in the rapid, ceaseless click of her adding machine. Whenever she thought of Pat Dougherty, it was with a wild, glad sense of escape. At this time Susan used to wake up and look out at the dew-wet grass of Mrs. Calverton's lawn, with a feeling as cool and free and fresh as the morning.

However, such a state of affairs could not last for anyone used to as much excitement as Susan. She began to get restless and to make excuses when the girls wanted her to go somewhere with them. She wanted—what did she want?—she didn't know. But something.

"I'll tell you what's the matter with you," Mrs. Calverton said. Susan used to go downstairs sometimes and talk to Mrs. Calverton in the evening. "You've never been in love. That's what's the trouble."

"I!" Susan exclaimed. "This is about the first time I've been out of it."

"You think so," Mrs. Calverton said.

She rocked. She was mending curtains, while Susan embroidered a stamped pink nightgown that she had bought in the "art goods department" of Stephenson's store. She ducked her mouth and bit off a thread.

Susan laughed. It was funny to hear

Mrs. Calverton talking to her!—Mrs. Calverton, shapeless and faded, whose husband (everyone knew) had been good-for-nothing, never kept a job, went out with other women, and had left Mrs. Calverton to take in roomers and keep this old family home of hers going.

"That's so," Mrs. Calverton insisted. "I know what I'm talking about." She added, with that portentous mysteriousness in talking about men and marriage that older women affected, and that Susan had always laughed at, "You'll see some day!"

Susan laughed gleefully again. But when she went back upstairs to her room, that she had taken such delight in arranging and keeping just as she wanted it, she felt restless and lonely. She resented Mrs. Calverton. Old married women always pretended to know so much. Besides kindness, and a sad dwelling upon past mysterious events, it seemed to her that there had been resentment in Mrs. Calverton's tone, and a gloomy looking forward to seeing Susan leveled down at last with other women. But, superior as she felt, what Mrs. Calverton had said—her tone and her look of quiet, mysterious knowledge recurred sometimes to Susan; and again she felt that restlessness.

She began to look at men with a different eye, although she was scarcely aware of it. Town seemed all dull and too familiar to her, and she thought of going away somewhere. She was jealous of her present freedom, and tired of it. At any rate, she couldn't stand "the girls" any longer!—their twitterings, their secrets, their eager veiled interest in every man who appeared. They all seemed silly to her; and there was even more interest in the saddened, subdued, mysteriously completed presence of Mrs. Calverton.

Not that Susan thought much of Mrs. Calverton's great wisdom!

One day she happened to pass the Doctor on the street. She had never really thought, before, of how handsome he was—and interesting, too, and mysterious! Living in that big old brick house, in the great lawn that was dark with trees, and with the dimly romantic legend of the "not quite right" aunt and invalid mother. She hadn't really thought of his good looks or noticed them because she hadn't considered the Doctor within the realms of possibility. He had never gone with a woman in this town. He never appeared at dances. Susan began to amuse herself by wondering about him and speculating half idly about him. When she hurt her arm, in a fall from the rocks at a picnic, she wouldn't let Ross Crabtree take her to Doctor Bradley's office when they got to town; but the next day, in a spirit of mischief and daring, and she didn't know what else, Susan went to the Doctor's office.

She hadn't exactly meant anything at first—or nothing that could be put into words. She hadn't thought when she began it that it would be essentially different from her other wild and yet carefully controlled affairs that never went too far. . . . Or had she meant something more? Had she been restless, wearied, impatient, tired of her cold and narrow hardness, wishing to be forced somehow into change? . . . At any rate, she had meant nothing like this. She hadn't dreamed, seeing that handsome face upon the street one day and wondering what the Doctor would be like if she knew him, how the sullen humors, the regal gloom, and lordly gaiety, the insistent warmth of his intimate presence could break into her shining hardness; and how at last her cool strength, at the appeal of his sudden childishness, could diffuse into a passion of tenderness. She had no idea when she started deftly, and with a subtly cool speculation, to draw him to her, that the thing could ever be real—that he would want more of her, and that she would give it, with the future—always so clear to Susan—lost in haze.

Dissatisfaction, certainly, hadn't come in at the start! There had been first—

looking back, when she happened to be alone, over the long, half-buried, only half comprehended course of the whole affair—first that subtle and slightly malicious pleasure, then amazement, fear, defiance, shame, and glory. She had grown closer and closer to him; and her first imperious overriding of difficulties had changed imperceptibly into defense, support, and compensation for his bonds.

It was a long while before dissatisfaction had actually begun—a tiny, gnawing restlessness at first, and then a never-ended craving, and now a mingled long resentment and sick tenderness. In the beginning she had found a dramatic pleasure in taking him and yielding to him in spite of difficulties. The impossibility had added to the intensity in a way that shook her with a wild, rapturous surprise, while at the same time that small, subtle, calculating part of her mind had kept thinking that the same impossibility left her ultimately free. Free! Well, she had learned something since then. Mrs. Calverton, had Susan admitted it to her, might well have been satisfied. Slowly, quite beyond reason, seemingly beyond her own desire, it began to enrage Susan that he did not simply burst the bonds, cast off those two old women, and be hers entirely. Always now, until his arms went round her, drowning her in rapture and tenderness, she was angry that he held her so, in this long suspension of living, that he would not finally take her or finally let her go.

But to her amazement, her shaken and furious incredulity, whenever she finally determined to bring the affair to some conclusion, she was stopped, in breathless terror, by the still more unbearable thought that she might lose him entirely. Beyond that she could not go.

Other girls in town, girls living at home and managing only a "date" now and then with an unattached man, envied Susan and the Doctor. They saw the two driving off in the Doctor's car, not to a dance—they never went to dances—but all by themselves for a long, mysterious ride. People had seen them sitting, or wandering slowly, under the trees in Dawsons Grove. The intimate apartness of the ambiguous couple, with the wonder and speculation that surrounded them, seemed to these girls so much more romantic than the open and inevitable companionship of the married couples in town. Letha Grove, if Susan had known it, looked at her with that furtive dubiousness not because she disapproved of her, but because she admired her, and because Letha felt herself humble and colorless beside Susan. The audacity and mystery of the unexplained relationship gave Susan a kind of glitter in the eyes of the town.

But Susan herself could scarcely realize how the situation and the relationship between them had slowly changed through the years.

She remembered, with brooding nostalgia now—a wonder if she could have made things end differently—what he used to tell her at first.

"You're the only thing I've got in this town. The only thing I've got in this damned, futile existence." And then his voice broke, and his big handsome body was twisted and crumpled in pain and longing before her awed, incredulous eyes. "Oh, God, Susan—give me some happiness! You're free. You can do as you please with yourself. And I'm held in this damned—oh no, God, I can't call it that!—but I can't live in it any longer, they never let me out of it."

Yes, that was true. It was she who had been the free one, the incalculable one, at first. He used to tell her that she lived in the open daylight and he always in shadow. She was the only ray of daylight that he had. Was it through a long, underground persistence of craving, then, to right the balance and assert his final necessity of domination, that he had slowly bound her to him and taken her freedom with her love? By the giving of a free gift she had bound herself. But that she, Susan, should be conquered and held at

last by tenderness!—what an amazing overturning of nature and fate.

Gradually, what he said to her came to be:

"But how can I? You knew how things were in the beginning. Well, it's just the same. They're still alive. And you wouldn't live with them."

Even that was true. The old imperious Susan could not even have contemplated being shut up for a night with those terrible women in that gloomy house.

But it was his contentment, she thought now, that made her resentment burn. (But wasn't it she who had made him so?) Nevertheless, it was his contentment, under the long habit of sacrifice to those women, with the unfailing, romantic comfort of Susan's love—no matter how he might burst out into terrible despair at times, and at times cry brokenly in her arms. She wondered if he had grown to enjoy the gloom of misanthropy, his dark and dramatic aspect in it, fostered by the shuttered gloom of the big brick house. Sometimes it seemed to Susan, bitterly, that that was all her love had done for him. He was content to live in the aging splendor of the old home and then to come for happiness to the bright, small orderliness of Susan's rooms, to eat their perfect little dinners, to force out of her slim hardness a poignant comfort for all his wrongs, to remain with her—it might be—an hour in fierce and secret rapture, and then to break away and take the wholeness of himself back into the familiar gloom, leaving her broken. . . .

"My God, Susan, I can't change things! I wish you'd keep still."

She was not too loyal to wonder sometimes, now, if the hold of the two old women was still so inevitable. She had made him a different person from the solitary man she had passed upon the street. The compensation and sustainment had done their work. That terrible hold did not sap all his strength or turn his energy into hopeless brooding. He had a secret pride. And although he still shunned dances and social meetings—and made Susan shun them—in his old misanthropic way, he was no longer afraid to meet other men. His training and study, after all these years, was at last beginning to show; and people in physical extremity did not care about the equivocal reputation of their surgeon. He was making money now. Susan knew how much that meant; and fear had slowly grown into her that he could make a place for her if he would. But she dared not quiet the fear by an assurance that would force the last of her pride to break away from him.

And was there joy in her love for him any more? Yes, she had actually come to question that. Joy, which had made her look out at the familiar world through Mrs. Calverton's window one March morning upon thawing patches of snow which shone with a blinding brilliance, and feel that the song of the first spring robin had bubbled in sheer happiness out of her own body and heart? Tenderness which had melted the clear hard edges of her well-known little world and watered the dry exactness of her vision with a living freshness and wondering depth of comprehension? . . . Or had she yielded so much to him that she simply had nothing left for herself?

Then, perhaps, she would get a new dress or discover in a magazine a new kind of cushion she could make for her room. She would shampoo her hair and put in with her skilful fingers just the perfect suggestion of a finger wave. She would be feeling well. The whole affair would change its aspect for her. She would pity those two old women, who clung to the presence of their son, while Susan herself had all the best of him. She could look forward to the time when he would be hers altogether—when she could go to sleep beside him in a warm sweet luxury of ease, and wake up still beside him in the morning.

And she thought that she was glad—

yes, ultimately glad. His need, his domination, and his terrible dependence upon her, had forced out of her the sweetness of a compassion she had never known that she possessed. It held her to him with a tightness nothing more equal could have done. Mrs. Calverton was right—Mrs. Calverton knew after all. His dominance, more imperious because more needful than her own, had crushed out of pain a strangled fragrance that without him she would never have known.

His mother died. Susan heard it at noon in the drugstore. Fred Jefferson told her.

"I hear the Doctor's mother died last night."

Things irrelevant to that statement were the first that came into Susan's mind: Fred Jefferson's eyes, curious and cold, betraying the tone he had taken, and the calculated shock of his statement (Fred was an old beau of hers, he had always taken a sneering tone about her affair with the Doctor); and then a painful thrust of anger because she must hear from other people this news affecting the man who was hers. The news seemed to have no other significance, although a kind of sickness made her food tasteless to her.

It was not until she went out of the drugstore, into the open light of the street, that she stopped still—for the barest second—while the meaning of the event opened up dizziness before her.

"The Doctor's mother died last night."

A wildness of impatience thrilled through her. It was agony to go on with her work at the bank. She walked home through a changed, incredible world—it was June, lawns were fresh, roses were out. Susan hadn't noticed that until now. The low sunlight of half-past-five lay across Mrs. Calverton's lawn. The green thick stalks of the peony bush bent over and laid flushed thick blossoms against the cool earth. For the first time in years, Susan thought of the woods . . . in the deep green filter of sunlight, the flush of wild geraniums. . . . Cars sped down the wide bright street. She heard voices of children playing. All the town, all the world, was coming out of the tightness and uncertainty of spring into the open and sunlit freedom of summer.

There was a summery light in Susan's room. A pleasant light lay over the mirror. She stood and looked. Eagerness made the brown eyes sparkle out from the fine lines that were beginning to surround them. It flushed the cheeks and ripened the lips. Her whole white body in its pink summer dress was flushed and open and warm, like the roses, and the peonies, and the wild geraniums. She had not yet lost the youth of her girlhood, but womanhood curved the slight lines of her form. She was at her best this warm sweet hour of late afternoon . . . let him come, let him take her now, claim her, keep her. . . .

He telephoned the bare news to her—a guarded voice, withdrawn and strange. He could not see her just now. He would manage it to-morrow. But after all these years, on this perfect night, it was terrible to be thrown back again into the old tense suspension of living. She ate a solitary dinner, stood at the window awhile, and went to bed.

The news made its small uproar in the town. Not because of the Doctor's mother herself—she had been, in her own person, almost forgotten—but because of the way her death would affect the Doctor and Susan.

"What's been the matter with her?"

There were very few who could actually say. "She used to be quite a beautiful woman. The old Doctor did everything for her." It was rumored, but never quite substantiated, that the old Doctor had taken his own life. But they only knew that for years she had absorbed the care and money of her son; and all reminiscence of her ended:

"I suppose now the Doctor will marry Susan."

And Susan, accepted for some time in a role seemingly static, became a heroine of a sort in the eyes of the town again. Her old challenging interest came back to her. She seemed no longer set apart from the town's life. Again she was appreciated in her shining and immaculate slimness; although now the memory of the affair, the never-ending curiosity and speculation as to exactly how far it had gone—its culmination indignantly denied by the innocent and insisted upon with secret delight and outward cynical derision by the knowing ones—shed a deeper and more significant aura of romance about her.

But the summer went on and the thing still hung fire. The Doctor stayed on in the brick house. Susan went daily to her work at the bank and back to her rooms at Mrs. Calverton's. The roses were gone, the peonies shed their petals on the grass; there were only bitter-smelling yarrow and boneset in the woods. People wondered, laughed cynically, or were indifferent; women who had loved Susan's mother talked angrily about the selfishness of men; and the rest of the force in the bank, getting their heads together, declared:

"Susan ought to give him a jacking up!"

There were so many things to think of, the Doctor said. There was the old home. There was Aunt Agnes. She trusted him. After all these years, he could not put her in an institution. And when Susan, hard and resentful in her balked desire, would not agree, he called her cruel and cold. Susan, with the heat and confidence of her fresh bloom upon her, fought with him, almost in the old arrogant way.

"It can't stay as it is. Don't you see? That's all I'm saying."

Almost—but without the old straight and clear direction of her free imperiousness—because beyond that statement she dared not go. She was sobbing and angry, her hands still clutching with weakened passion at the edges of the couch, but a feeling of brokenness lay within her. The Doctor sat in the big chair that he claimed as his. His voice was husky. He was almost too tired to speak.

"Susan, I'm tired. I've got to have some time to myself. I've had this strain for years. I can't think of anything. I can't do anything now."

Then go, then go, Susan wanted to say. But it was only telling herself to go. She was bound up in him. The old habit of passionate consolation remained; and she could not keep her strength or her anger at the tired appeal of his hands loosely clasping the arms of the chair, and the bright remoteness of pain in his eyes. She went over and put nerveless arms about him and laid her wet cheek against his hair.

After he had left she lay on the couch; and then tired, more tired than he could be, more tired than anything in the world, she struggled up through a daze of weakness to take off her clothes, fold them neatly, wash her face, brush her hair—as her stern sense of orderliness still commanded—and lie down, on her single cot—lie down to the old dissatisfaction turned now into apathy.

The next morning the lawn outside the windows was not so bright. The green, still thick and deep along the edges, beside the sunken coolness of the old cement walk, was fading into dry brown at the center. The leaves had a look of dustiness.

The Doctor came to see Susan as always. But a sense of estrangement, an actual thing, not the old resentment that had made her turn more passionately to him, had crept between them. Or was he a little more cautious and infrequent, now that the eyes of the town were curiously upon him, and that something else might be expected of him?

Susan was no longer a glittering figure to the town. How had it happened? . . . She was good-looking still. The clear features, the slim, straight figure, the smart perfection still were

left. Her red-gold hair was smooth. But the fresh attraction of her bloom had faded out of her. How and when had it gone? A little while ago, and Susan was "looking better than ever." But now when she stared into her mirror it was with a sense of dry and hopeless helplessness. The brown eyes stared back, with the sparkle worn out of them, from a face not altered from its familiar contour but from which the living texture had faded. Her swift white hands had settled into a mechanical rhythm at their work in the bank. The warmth of sympathetic interest that people had felt for a few weeks was gone. They were thinking, while they looked at her curiously, "I wonder if he will marry her!"

For imperceptibly the light which shone upon that image of two had shifted and brought out the figure of the Doctor into relief. The lifting of the strain was beginning to tell. He looked fresher, freer, more vigorous. The gloom had lifted so that his handsomeness was no longer mysteriously perceptible through his aloofness. Anyone could see it now. He met people with an awakened interest. Nothing held him back from them—nothing but the still secret, unacknowledged pull of his affair with Susan. And they felt a new respect for him, for it was plain that he was his own man at last.

"Well, the poor fellow," men often said, when women accused him of dealing selfishly with Susan, "he's been tied down ever since he was a kid. Let him stretch himself awhile before he gets tied down again."

Women, on the other hand, to men who still admired and stood up for Susan, often said with a hard, small clarity of perception:

"I think he could do better than Susan now."

So that no one was really surprised when he started going with another girl.

Susan knew it long before she consciously knew it as a definite actuality, long before her tortured imagination began to settle and dig its talons into the actual image of now this girl and now that. She could only turn at night in a restless fever of conjecture and rejection of the fact itself. She wanted to know, and at the same time skirted all possibility of discovery, until finally her torture of uncertainty grew more unbearable than knowledge itself, and forced her to say to him—a laughing hint that couldn't possibly be true, "I believe you must be going with some other girl!"

He answered her impatiently and without sympathy, "Well, good heavens, Susan, you played around long enough! We can't shut out the whole world forever."

He to say that! But when he had been bound and moody, it was just what she must do!—until now, forced into the way that he had made for her, she wanted no one but him. Another of her accusations against him. They were piling up into a weight of pain that lay upon her and ruined her happiness with him. Still, they did not suffice to permit her to be the one who broke the tie. Susan had been as calculable as quicksilver with the other men whom she had known. But her rectitude and loyalty, once demanded, once actually forced and given, held her with a grip beyond resentment.

That answer, little as it told and incredible as it seemed, was an admission. And now the torture of her imagination was worse than anything she had gone through before. She did not know who it was. People were thoughtful enough to avoid all mention of the name, and even of the Doctor's name; but she could see their knowledge in the curious, conjecturing glances of their eyes. Her natural swift directness made her crave to go straight to the point and learn the fact. But that long suspension of action seemed to have bound her into itself so that she was unable to move hand or foot out of the new agony of suspense.

Susan was too clear-sighted to deceive herself with false reasons for the longer and ever more irregular intervals between his visits. In these intervals she wondered bitterly why she wanted him to come at all. She had allowed—they had allowed—that brief brightness of recovered June to die out of the summer, and since then it had never been the same. She felt as if their love were going as irresistibly and irrevocably as the summer itself. She tried fiercely to wrench what sweetness she could out of every meeting, giving up in the end to her failure with the same dry hopelessness that came upon her when she looked at her fading image in the glass. She was out of step—could not catch the new rhythm—had responded for so long to his need that she had no response for his new desire for lightheartedness.

But she could have responded! Why, she used to be known as the gayest girl in town! All the boys had said of her, "You can have the most fun with Susan." And after all the years of passionate submission to his unhappiness, that old brightness had been alive in her only a little while ago. It was perhaps her worst accusation against him that he had, at that time—*her* time—forced out of her tenderness and consolation again instead of fulfillment.

Now, what had she left? But she could not let him go.

Fear had crept into the place of dissatisfaction in the tense center of her mind. It gnawed at her all the time, no matter what she was doing. Sometimes she would stop work for a moment in the bank, caught in an inexplicable breathlessness of fear. She dreaded having him come and dreaded just as much that he might not come. Every meeting might be their last. Then why not make it the last? . . . She understood Mrs. Calverton now.

Still, outwardly, the affair seemed to go on pretty much as it always had. They had their little dinners together. The warm weather lasted on into the fall; and on Sunday they were to drive as usual to the Four Corners.

Susan dragged herself out of her tired inertia and got up in good time on Sunday morning so that she could bathe, wash and wave her hair, and press her white-silk sleeveless dress. Now, in the bright daylight, she wondered why she should dread this meeting. She thought of their long time together. One meeting like this could not really end it—not with the leaves still on the trees, dahlias still scarlet out in the garden, only one red branch on the big soft-maple tree. She tried to wrest confidence out of the immaculate slimness of the figure in the glass—when she turned just that certain way, the long lines of the form seemed perfect, and the brown eyes were dark and bright in the white skin under the faint shadow of the white hat. But she knew that she dared not risk turning and letting the light fall this way and that. The same inexplicable fear kept gnawing under her expectation.

She looked out of the window and saw the Doctor coming up the walk. His roadster stood out in front. He looked handsome, large, well-dressed. Susan felt even more than the old thrilling leap of pride. She wanted to tell everyone that this man was hers. The time had long passed when it was enough to know this sweetly in secret. The familiarity of going down the walk together and getting into the car made her fear look small and foolish, like a night terror dragged into daylight.

"Have a good time!" Mrs. Calverton called. She stood and looked after the couple.

All the same, Susan had the feeling that the large, well-kept surgeon's hands upon the wheel were not hers to touch. The profile was strange. She chattered recklessly to keep him from speaking.

The Docter seemed, after a little while—and that might have been only because the motor wasn't acting well—to be responding to her. It was just like all of their drives, so that, when

they came to the top of the One-Mile Hill, turned aside from the main road, and stopped in the midst of the tangle of fall flowers, the silence brought back fear to her with a shock of surprise which blinded her. She sat in incredulous stillness; but her heart was pounding. She tried to say that she would get out and pick some goldenrod.

"Susan, look here."

Even her breathing was suspended. The world was stopping.

"We've had the best out of this. Don't you think so, too?"

Silence.

He turned toward her, and something like the old pleading broke through the strained huskiness of his voice. It was almost like an accusation.

"You must have known this was coming as well as I did." Silence . . . "My God, I wish you'd say something!"

Through her dry throat, Susan forced a muttered, "What?"

"Well, just a response. You make me do it all."

"What is there to say?"

That was all there was to it. Susan felt it, in a terrible tiredness, as she sat with her slim hands loose in her silken lap. The great autumn landscape of brown fields and tufted trees spread out beyond the hill. She saw it. But she could not even feel pain for the difference between this chance final view and all the other happy ones.

The Doctor felt it. He did not even try to explain. There was so much to be said that there was nothing to be said. And yet there was little after all. The thing had come to an end. He sat hunched loosely over the steering wheel and stared at the autumn landscape, too.

There was a sort of ease between them as they drove back to town, the ease of mutual understanding again, and of apathy. But for the Doctor, the apathy was only for the moment. It was the temporary conclusion of one thing. There lay beyond it the fresh and eager beginning of another. Brightness lay just beneath the tired glaze of his eyes.

Susan could not go beyond her sense of final completeness—to her, it was relief, if it was anything at all. When they reached town, she saw the Sunday streets, empty and stony, of the familiar business section, and thought that now she was entering them for the first time in years with love and pain gone from her. There was no emotion in the thought.

It was the Doctor whose face, Susan noticed with wonder, when they stopped in front of Mrs. Calverton's again, was broken up with pain; and he begged her before he could let her out of the car to tell him that she felt as he did about it and understood. They had both had the best out of this, hadn't they? What was the use in dragging it on? And he had never, in his whole life, felt a moment of freedom to be himself. . . .

"I want you to tell me that, Susan."

"Tell you what?"

"Well . . . that you feel this as much as I do."

"Yes . . . I guess I do."

She smiled at him quickly. But she got out of the car bitter with her final resentment. He could not even leave her without her reassurance; and she could not help giving it.

She took off her white hat at the mirror and stared at herself in bleak bitterness. He was right. Why should he care for her now? She hated him because he had forced out of her a tenderness that was beyond her nature. And then, still staring with dry, dark eyes at her faded face, she hated herself as much. It was what she had wanted—what she had asked for—the change, the something beyond herself—the something that would break into her and make her over again. It seemed to her that she had not really understood what Mrs. Calverton had meant until now.

The affair was broken. The small anticlimax of the ending had proved final.

Susan kept on with her work at the bank. She still dressed smartly and im-

maculately, kept scent of the new styles in hats and scarves and beads and, after a little while, had an occasional date with a traveling man or even with one of her old beaux. But they asked her without much ardent interest—because she was a good dancer and because Susan had always been a man's woman and because she was at hand.

The hard truth was that Susan was passée. Young girls no longer adored the sheer perfection of her clothes. Men coming into the bank no longer had the pleasantly disturbing sense of an exceedingly attractive girl. They did not try to linger at the window when they took the money from her white fingers. Letha Grove spoke to Susan now as an equal, perhaps even an inferior—because Letha herself was full of new interests, planning for a trip abroad that was going to change her whole life. . . . Why? Susan was not old, still good-looking, not much changed. It was only, perhaps, that a suggestion of spareness had hardened the slimness of her form, a set dryness the clear features of her face, and about her clothes and her hair there was some finality of precision from which the interest was gone.

"Yes," Mrs. Calverton thought, "that's the way it goes."

She looked for a moment at her own face in the darkened mirror of the old-fashioned parlor. She saw it faded, sad, old, wise with a wisdom she could not be without, and yet that she might wish she had never had to learn.

The whole town, of course, knew that the affair—whatever it had been—was over. They blamed the Doctor and felt sorry for Susan, but without much conviction, at that. Not nearly as much as one might have expected. "She ought to have brought him to time sooner," the men at the bank agreed. They had always, for the sake of Susan's usefulness and the bank's respectability, taken the line that it was merely a case of "going together" and "not yet able to get married." The Doctor was beginning to show an interest in Marjorie Pratt. She was only three or four years younger than Susan, but gay, wealthy, fresh. The Doctor was having a good time for the first moment in his life. Who could blame him? His affair with Susan was bound up with the old days. She wouldn't make the best wife for him now. She had worked too long at that one job in the bank. There were plenty of men who were indignant; but there were others who said, "Well, we don't know the inside of these things."

The older women who had known Susan's mother, and always taken a particular interest in her because of that, were unhappy to see that the long affair, which they had regarded so fearfully and about which they had tried to give their warnings, had come to nothing. They wondered about Susan. They should think it would break her heart, they said. For reluctant as the innocent and kind-hearted among these ladies were to credit "anything bad" about Susan—a girl whose family they had known intimately—they all agreed that "men were selfish" and that there was little hope of happiness in these long engagements.

Nevertheless, Susan did not die when the affair was over. In fact, she was aware of other powers in her that had never been brought to fullness. In spite of the bleak dreariness in which she moved, she resented the finality of her aspect in the eyes of the town.

She was alive. She had to think of what to do with her life. At times she considered marrying. There was even a touch of grateful warmth in the thought of a home. Pride—the obviousness of the reason for the change—was all that kept her from moving away from Mrs. Calverton's. She had domestic and managing instincts that had never been given free play. And if the freshness and ease of her attraction were gone, there was enough of her old sure confidence left to tell her that she could marry if she would. A home . . . she would put everything into that, not into the man; forget the Doctor.

For a while, she looked at the men

who came into the bank with a faintly reawakened interest. She would have to work now to get one of them; but that would be all the more reason for doing it. There was old Tommy Rumsey. His wife was dead. He had always liked Susan, if he was not quite so apt, now, to pat her cheek and squeeze her hand. To him, however, she was young. He was a rich old codger. The town would have to yield her, involuntarily, a place among the matrons if she married him; and sometimes it amused one side of her mind —an earlier side, belonging to the old Susan, having nothing to do with the Doctor—to conjecture what she could make him do. Could she force him out of that big old house in the country and into a new one in town? Susan thought she might. Now, when she was walking home at night, she made long, interminable plans about what she would do if she married Tommy Rumsey—only to lose them abstractedly, if her eye caught sight of a new car or a strange person or just anything.

And her intention of attracting him—sometimes seriously decided upon—always failed when he came into the bank in his bluff, sentimental, aged person. What was the matter with her? Had she found that love left her with much? But she could not make marrying Tommy Rumsey for a home seem worth while.

And the other men—the bank examiner, whom she knew to be a bachelor; a certain pleasant traveling man; Sid Bartley who had started out as a mechanic, but now, with a garage of his own, was a new possibility—they were not worth while, either.

In fact, Susan felt with an amazement about which she could do nothing that she didn't want to marry anyone. She resented the patronage in the tone of her old beaux—she wasn't done yet!—and the pitying tone of the older women, the way in which the town took it for granted that she was still thinking of the Doctor. In the bleak clarity of her vision, she had admitted the truth when he had said that it was ended. Sometimes she wondered . . . if she had told him this or that at such and such a time . . . but she had waited too long until expectation had frayed out into nothing. His need and demand had crushed out of her more tenderness and passion than perhaps she had possessed. Why should just she, Susan, the most unlikely one, have been sacrificed to that need? But she understood Mrs. Calverton in that, too. She could not really wish it had never been. She might be happier, but she would not be what she was now, not this Susan.

Her love for him had gone too long balked, half fed, unsatisfied. It had sucked her dry. All that it had really left was her practical capability. She took refuge in the shelter of that, away from feeling. It grew restlessly. She was no longer contented in her work in the bank. She began to talk about going West and finding something else to do. Nothing seemed interesting now, but she could foresee—at the end of a long dim vista of change—how an interest might open up. She was not finished.

But it was finished—her affair with the Doctor . . . her heart; yes, her life after all. . . . The Doctor was marrying Marjorie Pratt. He was building a new house and sending off the old aunt to an institution. His practice was enlarging. People took him as he was. But as long as she lived in this town, they would never look at Susan without thinking of the Doctor.

THIS QUESTION OF BIRTH CONTROL

BY DOROTHY DUNBAR BROMLEY

IDEAS of social virtue vary with every age. The primitive woman who refused to allow her newly born child to be put to death in accordance with the unwritten law of her tribe would have been shunned as unvirtuous by her kinsfolk, as would the Spartan mother who connived to save her weakling offspring from the rigors of death by exposure. Virtue consisted in doing that which was for the good of society, and it was not for the good of island-dwelling or nomadic tribes to multiply rapidly, just as it was not for the good of warlike Sparta to rear children of an inferior physical type.

With the advance of civilization in ancient Greece and Rome infanticide gave way to various abortive practices which in their turn were countenanced by society. Later, however, the Christian doctrine that every soul is capable of salvation made a crime of abortion as well as of infanticide; while the Biblical exhortation "increase and multiply" pointed the way to virtue for all but the celibate priests. To-day Christian society still formally adheres to these principles, and yet abortion has long been common in both Europe and America, while its modern alternative, birth control, is resorted to by an increasing number of persons.

In our own country this change in social behavior has for the past fifty years been in indirect contravention of the law, inasmuch as Section 211 of the Federal Penal Code makes it a criminal offense, punishable by five years in jail or a fine of $5,000 or both, to send through the mails or other common carrier "any article, drug or medicine, or any obscene, lewd or lascivious publication, intended for preventing conception or producing abortion." This law was passed by Congress in 1873 at the instigation of Anthony Comstock, presumably to put a stop to the traffic through the mails of obscene post cards and literature. Why the ban was extended to such contraceptive knowledge as was even then known to respectable people is not a matter of record. In any event, similar obscenity laws were soon afterwards enacted by the various states, many of them containing a specific prohibition against the dissemination of contraceptive information or devices. These laws are no more obeyed than is the Volstead Act. Yet they have been successful in withholding contraceptive knowledge from the masses and in limiting the privileged classes to bootlegged products. Whether this is a desirable state of affairs is a very large question indeed.

II

The problem of birth control, linked as it is with the population problem, is one of the most interesting of the modern age. Academically, at least, it has been a moot point ever since an obscure English clergyman, the Reverend T. R. Malthus, published his essay on "The Principles of Population" in the year 1798. It was his theory that "the chief cause of human strife and misery lies in the constant tendency of mankind to increase beyond the means of subsistence." And after a systematic sur-

vey of the various races of the world, he endeavored to show that this natural excess of population was invariably checked either by some such restraint on procreation as infanticide and abortion or by such destructive forces as disease, war, famine, and poverty. He offered no remedy for this dilemma short of celibacy or late marriage, and it was left for the Utilitarians, with their doctrine of "the greatest good for the greatest number," to urge birth control as the logical solution. The Reverend Mr. Malthus' theory of the ratio of human increase as compared with the ratio of the increase of the means of subsistence was destined to be upset by the industrial developments of the nineteenth century. But his general conclusions as to the dangers inherent in excess population have not yet been broken down.

It is a fact that Nature has provided in man, as in animals, for the maintenance of the species by a capacity for reproduction far in excess of its needs. It is also a fact that civilized man is not less fertile, but if anything a little more fertile than was primitive man. Darwin was convinced that the fecundity of the human race as a whole had increased during past times, inasmuch as civilized man is better able to adapt himself to such changing conditions of environment as tend to depress the fertility of savage races. As a corollary to this idea, Havelock Ellis suggests that the sex impulse has gained in strength during the ages, since civilized man is less preoccupied with the physical struggle for survival than was primitive man; and he points to a corresponding difference in the sex habits of wild and domestic animals of the same species. In any event it is true that with the emergence of the great historical races and a more settled type of life, large families came to be the rule, whereas primitive families had averaged three and not more than four children. At the same time, with the rise of towns and cities, plagues and epidemics, together with wars and famines, exerted a constant check on the increase of peoples, so that up until the nineteenth century the population of the entire world is supposed not to have exceeded 850 millions. During the course of that century the industrial revolution and the opening up of vast continents greatly enhanced the earth's resources, while the development of medicine and the new humanitarianism saved and prolonged thousands of human lives. As a result the population of the world was approximately doubled in one short century, amazing as the fact may seem.

It can hardly be denied that this rapid multiplication of human beings in the nineteenth century set the stage for the World War. In 1901 a German writer, Herr Arthur Dix, declared that "because the German people nowadays increase at the rate of 800,000 inhabitants a year, they need both room and nourishment for the surplus." A decade later Bernhardi baldly announced, "Strong, healthy, and flourishing nations require new territory for the accommodation of their surplus population. Since almost every part of the globe is inhabited, new territory must, as a rule, be obtained at the cost of its possessors, that is to say, by conquest, which thus becomes a law of necessity. . . ." A phrase with a similar intent—"necessity knows no law"—was to be used by Bethmann Hollweg when he felt called upon to justify Germany's invasion of Belgium.

To-day Italy has an excess of 500,000 births over deaths annually, and furthermore, according to a recent speech of Mussolini's, has as many as 400,000 men unemployed. Yet the dictator has recently secured the passage of laws taxing bachelors and forbidding the dissemination of birth-control information. If these laws are actually obeyed, Mussolini may before long be driven by Bernhardi's principle of necessity to seek to conquer new territory.

In the Far East Japan is growing at the rate of half a million lives annually, with little hope of relief, since both

Australia and the United States have closed their doors to the yellow race. From China and India, too, we hear complaints that the Western nations, by introducing hygiene among them and condemning infanticide, have made their starvation problem worse than it was before.

The possession of colonies would not seem to be the ultimate answer. Great Britain, as the world knows, is faced to-day with the necessity of providing for a million unemployed men who refuse to emigrate—and who would not be enthusiastically welcomed by the Dominions if they did emigrate.

France alone, among the leading nations of Europe, has no excess-population problem. This is partially due to the fact that during the nineteenth century, when the peoples of other countries were multiplying rapidly, France was practicing birth control quite extensively, and her birth rate was falling accordingly. Yet to-day, contrary to popular assumption, her rate, which was 18.8 per thousand in 1926, runs higher than that of England, which was 17.8, and only a little lower than Germany's, which was 19.5 for the same year. Her death rate, however, is very high, so that her margin of natural increase for 1926 was only 1.3 per thousand, as compared with 6.1 in England and Wales, and 7.8 in Germany. For this reason France has recently taken alarm and passed a law forbidding the sale of birth-control appliances, a law which is said to have thus far resulted only in an increased number of operations. Obviously it would have been far less wasteful for France to go about reducing her abnormally high death rate by improving public-health conditions.

That a country may practice birth control and still increase in population is proved by the case of Holland, where contraceptive information has been freely disseminated for the past fifty years not only by doctors but by midwives and mere housewives shown by the Neo-Malthusian Band how to safeguard others. Yet the women there are apparently still willing to bear children—more willing than the women either of this country or of the countries just mentioned—for Holland's birth rate runs several points higher. More important still, her death rate is favorably low, so that she has a larger margin of natural increase (14.25 in 1926) than the rest of us have. Undoubtedly her excellent general hygiene keeps down the death rate, but it is also fair to assume that the widespread practice of birth control, with its attendant saving of maternal lives, has reduced the number of yearly deaths.

What the future holds for Europe—whether populations will continue to grow to the point where teeming nations must burst their bounds, or whether the female contingent will eventually become so emancipated as to cease to reproduce itself, as Dr. Robert R. Kuczynski has recently predicted in his study of "The Balance of Births and Deaths in Western and Northern Europe"—is a matter for wide speculation. It is certain, however, that at the present time most of Europe, as well as large parts of Asia, are overcrowded and underfed, and that birth control is the only practical solution thus far offered.

III

On the surface, our own population problem presents somewhat different aspects, since we still have a surplus of land, and since the entire question has been greatly complicated by the factor of immigration. During the latter part of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of this century the gradual drop in our birth rate was more than compensated for by the decline in the death rate due to the conquest of science over disease, and by the increment from immigration. In fact from 1900 to 1925 our population jumped from 75 million to 115 million, a 50% increase. At that time Prof. Raymond Pearl of Johns Hopkins University predicted that

we should have close to two hundred million people in this country by the year 2040. Since 1925, however, the birth rate has been decreasing a little faster than formerly, dropping from 21.4, to 19.7 in 1928, while the death rate has shown very little decline, so that for the period 1925–28 we averaged only 8.6 as a margin of natural increase. At the same time it must be remembered that the influenza epidemic in 1926 and 1928 took a toll in births as well as in deaths.

Whether the margin between our birth and our death rates will continue to grow narrower in the years to come is a matter for blind prophecy, because no one knows how much farther science may go in conquering disease and postponing death. In any event a population must be appraised, in the opinion of Professor Henry P. Fairchild of New York University, "not according to its size, but according to whether it is too large or too small to promote the maximum human happiness."

We talk largely of American prosperity and yet we forget that thousands of families have not yet felt its golden influence. Child labor is a case in point. This barbaric practice goes on, not because parents are inherently cruel, but because they are driven to it by harsh economic necessity. An investigation of tenement home work carried on in New York in 1922 revealed that in the small families of four or less the children were allowed their freedom after school, but that in the large families, averaging seven children, the latter were obliged to come home and sew on coats or make artificial flowers. Summing up the child labor situation, Owen B. Lovejoy, formerly General Secretary of the National Child Labor Committee, has estimated that with family limitation in the poorer classes, perhaps one-third of all the working children in this country could be saved from a life of exploitation.

A recent plea for funds from the New York Child Welfare Committee stated that in some families "as many as thirteen, fourteen, and even seventeen human beings sleep in three or four rooms." These are the children that often become delinquents, we are told by Miriam Van Waters, who has seen thousands of them pass through the Juvenile Courts in California and a number of other states. Agreeing with her, the eminent criminologist, Dr. George W. Kirchwey, believes that "the practice of birth control would go far towards a solution of the crime problem to-day."

Millions of dollars are spent annually by the several States of the Union for the care of the insane, mental defectives, and epileptics. To meet this problem twenty-three States have active eugenic laws providing for the sterilization of individuals so degenerate mentally or physically that their progeny would become a burden to the community. In the remaining States, however, defectives continue to spawn, and their offspring frequently become a menace to the community. Only the other day I read in the newspaper of the brutal murder in Connecticut of a three-year-old child perpetrated by two boys of seven and eight, the sons of a man who had formerly been an inmate of an insane asylum. Obviously this man should have been sterilized before he was released, but in these cases the asylum doctor cannot take such a step unless the state law instructs him to do so.

Almost as great a menace to society are the thousands of men and women afflicted with syphilis who go on reproducing their kind. More often than not women have no choice in the matter, like the one who wrote Mrs. Margaret Sanger begging for advice.

"I am to-day the mother of six living children, and have had two miscarriages. My oldest son is now twelve years old and he has been helpless from his birth. The rest of my children are very pale, and I have to take them to the doctor quite often. One of my daughters has her left eye blind. I have tried to keep myself away from my husband since my last baby was born,

but it causes quarrels, and once he left me saying I wasn't doing my duty as a wife." This is only one of the many heartbreaking pleas for help that Mrs. Sanger has collected in her recent book, *Motherhood in Bondage*.

Even the children of large families that have no taint in their blood still stand a poorer chance of survival than do the children of small families, according to the Census figures on Infant Mortality for 1926, which show that less than half of the childbearing mothers of that year who had borne as many as seven children had them all living, while 70 per cent of those with four children, 80 per cent of those with three, and 89 per cent of those with two, had lost none by death. No less revealing are the results of a study made by Dr. Alice Hamilton, now Professor of Industrial Medicine at Harvard University, among 1,600 foreign-born families in Chicago. Comparing the families of eight children and over with the families of four children and under of the same nationality, she found that the former averaged 267 deaths to every thousand births, as against 118 in the smaller families.

Among large families it is the later-born children who stand the poorest chance of survival in the opinion of Dr. S. Adolphus Knopf of New York, a specialist in tuberculosis. He thinks this is because "the mother, worn out from previous pregnancies, gives to the later child a heritage of physiological poverty which makes it less resistant to infectious disease, and particularly to tuberculosis." Also, with the increase of the family, the father's earnings rarely increase proportionately, so that the youngest children grow up in overcrowded quarters and are given less good food and less warm clothing in severe seasons.

President Hoover himself, when Secretary of Commerce, drew up "A Child's Bill of Rights," in which he held that "There should be no child in America that has not the complete birthright of a sound mind in a sound body, and that has not been born under proper conditions." If such a millennium is to be attained, birth control would appear to be the only means of attaining it, since our philanthropic organizations, with all of their vast expenditures of money and energy, have proved themselves quite unable to give every child this birthright. As a witness to this inevitable failure, the Reverend A. Ray Petty says he became convinced after ten years as a minister in the tenements of New York that "many of the efforts of society and of the Church to reorganize life in these squalid tenements are like trying to sweep the ocean back with a broom." In his opinion, "large families among the poor are not God's will but society's folly." It would seem inevitable that the distinguished personnel of President Hoover's recently appointed National Conference for Child Welfare should arrive at the same conclusions. In case they do, it will be interesting to see whether they go so far as to recommend birth control as the first essential in putting the Child's Bill of Rights into effect.

IV

But it is argued that if birth-control knowledge should become a common thing, the very classes who should not have it—the well-to-do and the educated—would make the most intelligent use of it. This view is held by Dr. Louis Dublin who gloomily predicts that the more desirable elements of the population before long will be swamped "by an increased proportion of defective and dependent stock."

There is no doubt but that the educated classes in America are rearing smaller and smaller families. Professors Ray Irwin Baber and Edward Alsworth Ross of the University of Wisconsin found in an investigation in the Middle West, a shrinkage in the size of middle-class families from 5.4 children to 3.3 in the course of one generation. Figures from Harvard show that the classes from 1850 to 1890 averaged

2.51 children per married graduate, or only 1.71 per graduate; while Yale men averaged 2.57 and 1.99 respectively. Statistics from women's colleges, already quoted in a previous article, show that the married graduates who have been out of college at least fifteen years have on the average less than two children.

For these very reasons, Doctor Dublin argues, birth-control knowledge is dangerous. For the same reasons, his opponents argue, it must be put into the hands of all classes. Among the latter Prof. Raymond Pearl declares unequivocally, "Entirely free and widespread dissemination of information about methods of contraception is the only way at once humane and intelligent of attempting to meet the menace of the differential birth rate." He goes on to observe with a good deal of human penetration that "the efforts of the eugenists to correct the present situation, by endeavoring to induce the socially, economically, and in some part biologically superior classes to reproduce more freely—as a sort of transcendental social duty—have not met with any statistically discernible success."

In other words, men and women who will to have children do so for their own pleasure and satisfaction, not from any sublime feeling of duty to the state. If we are too lazy as citizens to take an active part in the government to the extent of voting intelligently and regularly, is it likely that we shall assume the responsibility of rearing children for the good of society?

That there is no great danger that the lower levels of society will outbreed the upper when birth control information is made available to all, has recently been proved by Dr. Julius Wolf, the eminent German political economist, in his recent work, *Die Neue Sexualmoral und das Geburtenproblem*. There he shows that the birth rate among the working population of Berlin, Dresden, Hamburg, Stockholm, Oslo, and a number of other cities is very little higher than that of the richer sections, while in London the poorest districts exhibited in 1926 a birth rate approximating that of the well-to-do levels six years previously.

In America we are not at present faced with the problem of excess population. But there is no reason to think that our country will be any the better off for the two hundred million inhabitants which have been predicted for it by the year 2040. Professor Henry P. Fairchild, for one, considers it an interesting speculation as to "whether we have reached the level of optimum population or whether we have already passed over to the shady side of it." Certainly if our cities are to grow much larger we or our descendants will pay a terrible price for living in them.

V

In the final analysis the welfare of society derives from the welfare of its individual members. Birth control, therefore, must stand or fall according to its effect on the well-being of women. For it can fairly be said that a nation is no stronger than its so-called weaker sex.

In former times, before the Machine Age had laid bare our nerves and lowered our resistance, women may have been able to give birth to a steady succession of children without doing violence to their own health—although we have no means of knowing to what extent our grandmothers suffered from lowered vitality. At any rate the leading gynecologists are now agreed that every woman, no matter how strong in physique, requires a lapse of from two to three years between pregnancies if her health is not to suffer. Typical of the thousands of women who have no such respite, one woman writes, "I am only twenty-two years old and the mother of five children and I have brought one child into this world each year since I have been married. I am never rested and each day my health seems to fail me more."

It is an anomalous fact that the New York State Department of Health warns

women, in a circular which it distributes, that frequent and close pregnancies predispose mothers to tuberculosis; yet that same Department of Health is debarred by law from giving information which would enable a woman to avoid too many pregnancies *until after she has developed the disease.*

When birth-control knowledge is lacking, abortions follow as the night the day. No statistics on the subject are available, but doctors generally estimate that one-fourth of all pregnancies end in this way, while the report of a Special Committee on Criminal Abortions, quoted in Peterson and Haines' *Textbook of Legal Medicine and Toxicology*, stated that one-third of all pregnancies are interrupted. In 1903 they estimated the number of such cases at not less than one hundred thousand, six thousand of these ending in death. With the increase in population since then, the probable number of such operations assumes even more appalling proportions.

In every state a doctor may legally perform an abortion when it is necessary "to save the life of a woman suffering from disease or from a condition whose fatal progress would be hastened through pregnancy." But this is tantamount to locking the stable door after the horse has been stolen. Let us assume for a moment that a woman in convulsions resulting from toxemia enters a maternity hospital in one of the ten States where a doctor may not legally give contraceptive advice for any reason whatsoever. An abortion is performed, and the mother's life barely saved. When the patient is discharged she is warned by the doctor not to conceive again until she has fully recovered from her kidney trouble. But she is not told how to protect herself. True, if she becomes pregnant again she may return, and a second operation will be performed if it is necessary to save her life or her eyesight. Indeed, she can be aborted every four or six months if her kidneys go on strike each time. She may die in a convulsion, but the law will have been obeyed.

Many other women, driven crazy by poverty if not by ill health, themselves interrupt pregnancy by the crudest and most dangerous of methods. Still others in their desperation put their lives into the hands of quacks and doctors of dubious reputation, who often neglect the necessary surgical precautions. In fact it is one of the tragedies of modern medicine that "the trade is most common among those who are least competent to practice it."

VI

From the facts of the case it would appear that any sound program of preventive medicine would have to include birth control. Yet we are told by more than a few social reformers that self-control, not birth control, is the solution of all of these evils.

Birth control in itself is held to be dangerous in that it causes physical injury and subsequent sterility. Yet we have the word of one of the country's foremost gynecologists, Dr. Robert Latou Dickinson of New York, who has devoted the past six years to research in this particular field, that there is no scientific evidence of physical injuries having resulted from contraceptive methods that are clinically approved. He has, it is true, traced a number of cases of infection to a metal device which has never been recommended by any of the Birth Control Clinics, although a few private practitioners have mistakenly advocated its use. He also found that an abandoned German practice had caused some trouble. But these are isolated cases and only illustrate the necessity for sound birth-control instruction among doctors as well as among the laity.

There is likewise no proof that contraceptive measures subsequently cause sterility. Doctor Dickinson says that he has not yet heard of a case of a young couple examined at marriage and found presumably fertile who, after

using contraceptive methods for several years, were examined and found to be sterile—except in instances where the device just mentioned had been used. "Of impressions and beliefs there are any number," he says, "but good evidence—not yet."

It is apparent that "self-control" is hardly a solution for the many women who have no choice but to yield to their husbands if they want to maintain harmony in the family, nor for women who love their husbands too much to deprive them of what they seem to need. It must be remembered, too, that in a number of States refusal of conjugal rights constitutes grounds for divorce.

Even when the husband is willing to co-operate, it is doubtful if "self-control" or continence offers the best solution of the problem. For it must be borne in mind that in this connection continence means total abstinence if procreation is to be avoided, since so far as medical science has discovered, there is no period, popular prejudice to the contrary, when a woman does not run some risk of conceiving, unless she is already pregnant. In view of these facts, a German writer on the subject, Helen Stoecker, asks very pertinently, "Can anyone think that the majority of married people would, could, and should live together for years and years—and only every second year be able to be completely happy together?"

The best medical opinion believes that they should not. Dr. William Allen Pusey, formerly President of the American Medical Association, has stated the matter very conclusively:

"I am willing to say bluntly that sexual life is the elemental fact upon which satisfactory family life, as a rule, depends, and that without satisfactory sexual life, marital life as a rule is irreparably damaged. . . . The higher men rise in the intelligence scale, the more effort they make to limit their progeny to those they can provide for. It is in this effort at birth control in married life that such havoc is played with the happiness of marriage. Sexual enjoyment is largely psychical; the constant intrusion of the necessity for these restraints, crude and unsatisfactory as most of them are, and the consequent anxiety tend to destroy that enjoyment."

Not all physicians are courageous enough to put their views into print, but I have yet to find one of high standing who considers complete continence desirable for the normal married couple.

Among the conscientious objectors to birth control there are those who admit that it might improve the condition of the married, but who stand out against it on the ground that it would cause a wave of immorality in the land. As a matter of fact, as Doctor Pusey has remarked, illicit sex relations never have been checked either by the fear of conception or of venereal disease. He himself is of the firm conviction that the present state of affairs actually fosters immorality; that is to say, lack of adequate birth-control knowledge causes marital maladjustments, which in their turn cause men to look elsewhere for sexual gratification. The youth of the land present still another problem. It is feared that if knowledge of contraceptive methods became widespread, increased promiscuity might very likely result. Misgivings on this score account for the unwillingness of many high-minded people to support the birth-control movement; this is perhaps the opposition's most potent argument. Yet has it not been proved time and again that prohibitions alone will not protect [redacted]als of present-day American yo[redacted]hey must be taught a better rea[redacted]r continence than fear.

It is significant that many of the leaders of the clergy, far from frowning upon birth control as a destructive social force, are coming to see that it is essential to the welfare of society. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, one of the movement's staunchest defenders, has recently declared in print, "The day will come when the old haphazard spawning of many children, with popular lauda-

tion as a reward and perhaps a letter of appreciation from the White House, will be looked upon as utter barbarism. . . . You cannot trust God to bring everything out all right if you let the earth's population double every sixty years."

Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, another courageous advocate of the cause, considers that "the sacramental attitude toward life does not dictate that there shall be an illimitable and unchecked generation of life, but that humans shall will to bear children only when they are fitted to give them such a background as will make life worth living." Following the example of Rabbi Wise, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, meeting in Detroit, recently listened to a report strongly recommending birth control as a "method of coping with social problems."

One of the liberal leaders of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Reverend Dr. Karl Reiland of New York, has said flatly, "The Church's attitude on birth control must change. It must support this method of raising the level of existence. Objections on religious grounds are all irrelevant." In the Church of England both Dean Inge and Bishop Barnes have raised their voices in defense of birth control and of "the right of the poor to such information as the other classes now have."

In this country the Roman Catholic Church alone has set its face firmly against birth control and has organized a vigorous opposition to all attempts to repeal the present laws.

VII

In view of the evident need for birth control, our medical profession has been curiously apathetic in its attitude toward the problem. Doctors have not feared the hand of the law so much as they have feared that if they took the initiative in advising their patients as to contraceptive methods they would be labelled as "sex-minded" and classified professionally with the abortionist. That the terms birth control and abortion should still be confused by the laity seems incredible; yet not so incredible when we remember that the State and Federal laws link the two together. It was not many years ago that a Mayor of Boston made a speech denouncing abortion and birth control as one and the same thing. The average doctor is not only afraid of losing his standing, but he knows next to nothing about the science of contraception, for the subject is still ignored in all medical textbooks and in the curricula of all but a few of the medical schools.

It is hard to believe that doctors can be coolly indifferent to their patients' welfare; yet there are doubtless many like the one of whom a woman patient wrote, "I have asked my doctor, oh! so many times, to tell me something to do to prevent conception, but he won't tell. It is easy enough for him to say, 'Now you take your life in your hands if you have any more children!'"

It was the unwillingness of the medical profession to meet the problem which first stirred Mrs. Margaret Sanger to action fifteen years ago when she was working as a public health nurse in New York City. Appalled by the suffering of women from excessive childbearing, she applied herself to the study of contraceptive methods and to a campaign for their use. It was in those early years that she hit upon the very effective slogan, birth control, which is now used all over the world. Subsequently she organized the American Birth Control League and in 1917 she opened in New York the first Birth Control Clinic in this country. This step resulted in her arrest and imprisonment and the closing of the Clinic. But the court ruled in its decision that the work of the Clinic would not have been held illegal if it had been conducted by a licensed physician for the cure and prevention of disease, in accordance with Section 1145 of the New York State law which had been passed in 1881 as a postscript to the Comstock law of 1873, but had remained buried ever since.

Mrs. Sanger, therefore, opened in 1923 the New York Clinical Research Bureau, with accredited physicians in charge. Working under great handicaps, without the advantages of an official hospital connection, this Clinic has done important pioneer work. During the past six years it has given contraceptive advice to a total of 11,000 patients, while it has been obliged to refuse treatment to many more who had "no health reason." Women of all classes flock to this Clinic, regardless of their religious affiliations. Many of them are desperately afraid of pregnancy—as indicated by the shocking number of abortions in their histories. Yet these women can hardly be called shirkers, for the majority of them have already had from three to four children, while they report an average family income of less than fifty dollars a week. Incidentally, practically all of them have been successful in learning to use the contraceptive method recommended—once again disproving the theory that "the poor would be too ignorant to use birth-control methods if they did know about them."

Similar clinics, supported by lay funds with doctors in charge, have been established in six other cities, largely at Mrs. Sanger's and the League's instigation. Each of them is crowded with applicants.

When the New York Clinical Research Bureau was raided by the police in April of this year, the two doctors and three nurses in attendance were arrested, and the records seized. The case was dismissed, however, when it was proved in court that the Bureau had been operating within the State law. Among the doctors who appeared for the defense, the distinguished neurologist, Dr. Foster Kennedy, testified that "birth control is a factor in the preservation of the stability of the nervous system," while Dr. Frederick C. Holden, head of the Gynecological Division of Bellevue Hospital, testified that "recuperation on the mother's part depends on the proper spacing of her children."

The police who made the raid—it was led, ironically enough, by a policewoman—committed a tactical blunder in seizing 150 of the Bureau's confidential records. This violation of the immemorial rights of the profession aroused the New York Academy of Medicine and the New York County Medical Society to vigorous protest and ranged a number of New York's most influential doctors on the side of a birth control clinic.

Of recent years a gradual change has become discernible in the attitude of the medical profession. One doctor out of every eight is said to have written the American Birth Control League for contraceptive information, while nearly two hundred county medical societies have listened to lectures on the subject in packed meetings. A growing list of influential doctors are indorsing the theory of contraception for health reasons at least; Dr. J. Whitridge Williams of Johns Hopkins, for example, has given his support to the recently established Bureau for Contraceptive Advice in Baltimore. The Section on Obstetrics and Gynecology of the American Medical Association has twice recommended changes in the law wherever necessary, to allow control of conception by the physician; but the Association so far has tabled those resolutions to continue with less dangerous business.

Most encouraging of all is the constructive work being done by the Committee on Maternal Health, a self-constituted group which came together in 1923 for the express purpose of studying human fertility in its medical aspects. With such men as Dr. Samuel Lambert acting as Chairman, Dr. Robert L. Dickinson as Secretary, and Dr. Frederick C. Holden, Dr. Haven Emerson, Dr. Barton Cooke Hirst, and Dr. George W. Kosmak among its members, the Committee gained immediate prestige. In the beginning it approached the vexed subject of contraception in a purely scientific manner and instituted laboratory studies and the recording of case histories which will eventually place

this subject on a par with the other branches of medicine. Up to the present time no infallible contraceptive method has yet been evolved, although the one most in favor with the Committee on Maternal Health and with the Clinical Research Bureau shows a record of 95 per cent success in 800 checked cases. This is a method which enables the woman to protect herself. A more extensive study of 10,000 cases is now under way, but has not yet been completed.

The Committee has made definite progress in its efforts to educate the profession through articles and lectures on contraception. It has also been instrumental in establishing birth-control clinics in nine of the large New York hospitals and in five other hospitals throughout the country. So far these clinics have served fewer women than those run by the lay groups since they cannot advertise their services, and the routine process of admission acts as a deterrent. Furthermore the hospital staffs are not yet thoroughly in sympathy with the purpose of these clinics. It seems inconceivable that a doctor would allow a woman suffering from tuberculosis, kidney trouble, or serious heart disease to reach the point where abortion becomes necessary, when he might have referred her to a contraceptive clinic in his own hospital. Yet Doctor Dickinson declares that this has occurred more than a few times.

VIII

As matters stand to-day, twenty-one States have obscenity laws which specifically forbid the dissemination of contraceptive information. A number of these States make it a crime to possess, to impart such information, or to tell another where it may be obtained; so that if a friend or a relative in the ordinary course of conversation offered such advice, he or she would be technically guilty of breaking the law. Several States go so far as to assume the right to search private property for "contraband instructions." Connecticut heads the list for intolerance, with a statute that actually forbids its citizens to practice contraception! Nine states—Pennsylvania, Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas, Mississippi, Montana, Arizona, Idaho, Washington, and the District of Columbia—make no exceptions for physicians. To be sure, medical colleges and books are exempt in the first three of these; but if a doctor wishes to be strictly law-abiding he must keep to himself whatever he has learned through these media.

In Ohio, Indiana, Colorado, and Wyoming an exception is made for physicians and druggists acting to prevent disease, and for medical books and colleges; and in New York and Nevada, for physicians alone in order to prevent disease. In Colorado no "knowledge" of contraception may be brought *into* the State, and yet a birth control clinic is allowed to operate in the Colorado General Hospital.

Five other States—Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and California—have general laws against the advertisement, sale, or possession of contraceptive information or material which do not specifically exempt physicians. The New Jersey law, however, leaves the loophole that information may be given for "just cause"; and a clinic has recently been established in that State with a notable group of physicians on its medical board. In California, too, there are several clinics, two of them under county auspices, and no legal objections have been raised. The California clinics, and the one in Colorado, are the only ones under government auspices.

Of the remaining twenty-nine States all but two, North Carolina and New Mexico, have obscenity laws modeled very closely upon the Federal law, but not referring specifically to contraception. Birth-control clinics are operating in six of these States, and those that are under lay support give advice for economic reasons when the law allows them to do so.

Physicians in private practice appear to have little to fear from either the Federal or State obscenity laws. Numbers of conscientious doctors have given their patients the benefit of whatever contraceptive knowledge they had, and thus far there is no case on record of a doctor's having been prosecuted for such an act in his private practice. Neither have the Federal Post Office authorities interfered with the mailing of scientific books and articles on the subject to doctors. The Customs authorities, however, recently declined to allow the importation of supplies from abroad by the Baltimore Clinic, although interstate traffic by express has thus far been permitted.

Twenty-eight birth-control clinics concentrated in ten States cannot begin to take care of the demand. Where there are no such clinics the poor people suffer the greatest deprivation, for they do not enjoy the confidence of well-informed doctors. Even among the middle and upper classes the facts—and the fiction—of birth control are passed from individual to individual, and there is little scientific knowledge on the subject. It is unfortunate, for instance, that the sole method by which a woman can effectively protect herself should remain practically unknown in a number of States.

Compare the situation in this country with that in other countries. In England there has never been a law forbidding the circulation of birth-control information, and the proposal to give advice to the poor in the State Welfare Centers has recently been sanctioned by the House of Lords. In Holland there is only a law against advertisement and in the Scandinavian countries there are no restrictions whatsoever. In Germany contraceptive information is given in the public marriage-advice stations to women who stand in medical or economic need of it; while the insurance companies are allowed to sterilize those who are diseased or overburdened with children. In Russia the Soviet government has inaugurated an official inquiry into contraceptive technic and issues annually a scientific monograph to physicians.

Amendments to our laws which would exempt physicians have been urged for a number of years. But the bills have so far never got out of committee, either in Congress or in the State legislatures. The Roman Catholic Church, with its organized opposition, is frequently held responsible for this legislative stalemate. But it seems to me that we have to blame intrenched conservatism and individual apathy, rather than the obstructive tactics of any one group. Certainly if all of the men and women who practice birth control were to give these bills their active backing they would be passed in no time. It is surprising, for instance, that none of the national women's organizations—neither the National Women's Party, nor the National League of Women Voters, nor the National Federation of Women's Clubs—has as yet lent the movement their support. In New York the State League of Women Voters, as well as the New York City Federation of Women's Clubs, indorsed and worked for the bill which was defeated in committee at Albany last winter. But educated women as a whole have been blind to the suffering of thousands of women less fortunate than themselves. They have not cared to look beyond their personal concern in the matter. For as Arnold Bennett has said, "It is the notorious false shame of the Anglo-Saxon race: we do not like to talk seriously about the use of contraceptives." But we shall have to talk seriously about their use if we are to maintain our reputation as a humane nation, and if we are to raise the level of humanity, not merely propagate the race.

THE LADY IN THE LOOKING-GLASS

A REFLECTION

BY VIRGINIA WOOLF

PEOPLE should not leave looking-glasses hanging in their rooms any more than they should leave open check books or letters confessing some hideous crime. One could not help looking, that summer afternoon, in the long glass that hung outside in the hall. Chance had so arranged it. From the depths of the sofa in the drawing-room one could see reflected in the Italian glass not only the marble-topped table opposite, but a stretch of the garden beyond. One could see a long grass path leading between banks of tall flowers until, slicing off an angle, the gold rim cut it off.

The house was empty, and one felt, since one was the only person in the drawing-room, like one of those naturalists who, covered with grass and leaves, lie watching the shyest animals—badgers, otters, kingfishers—moving about freely, themselves unseen. The room that afternoon was full of such shy creatures, lights and shadows, curtains blowing, petals falling—things that never happen, so it seems, if someone is looking. The quiet old country room with its rugs and stone chimney pieces, its sunken book-cases and red and gold lacquer cabinets, was full of such nocturnal creatures. They came pirouetting across the floor, stepping delicately with high-lifted feet and spread tails and pecking allusive beaks as if they had been cranes or flocks of elegant flamingoes whose pink was faded, or peacocks whose trains were veiled with silver. And there were obscure flushes and darkenings too, as if a cuttlefish had suddenly suffused the air with purple; and the room had its passions and rages and envies and sorrows coming over it and clouding it, like a human being. Nothing stayed the same for two seconds together.

But, outside, the looking-glass reflected the hall table, the sunflowers, the garden path so accurately and so fixedly that they seemed held there in their reality unescapably. It was a strange contrast—all changing here, all stillness there. One could not help looking from one to the other. Meanwhile, since all the doors and windows were open in the heat, there was a perpetual sighing and ceasing sound, the voice of the transient and the perishing, it seemed, coming and going like human breath, while in the looking-glass things had ceased to breathe and lay still in the trance of immortality.

Half an hour ago the mistress of the house, Isabella Tyson, had gone down the grass path in her thin summer dress, carrying a basket, and had vanished, sliced off by the gilt rim of the looking-glass. She had gone presumably into the lower garden to pick flowers; or as it seemed more natural to suppose, to pick something light and fantastic and leafy and trailing, travelers' joy, or one of those elegant sprays of convolvulus that twine round ugly walls and burst here and there into white and violet blossoms. She suggested the fantastic and the tremulous convolvulus rather than the upright aster, the starched

zinnia, or her own burning roses alight like lamps on the straight posts of their rose trees. The comparison showed how very little, after all these years, one knew about her; for it is impossible that any woman of flesh and blood of fifty-five or sixty should be really a wreath or a tendril. Such comparisons are worse than idle and superficial—they are cruel even, for they come like the convolvulus itself trembling between one's eyes and the truth. There must be truth; there must be a wall. Yet it was strange that after knowing her all these years one could not say what the truth about Isabella was; one still made up phrases like this about convolvulus and travelers' joy. As for facts, it was a fact that she was a spinster; that she was rich; that she had bought this house and collected with her own hands —often in the most obscure corners of the world and at great risk from poisonous stings and Oriental diseases—the rugs, the chairs, the cabinets which now lived their nocturnal life before one's eyes. Sometimes it seemed as if they knew more about her than we, who sat on them, wrote at them, and trod on them so carefully were allowed to know. In each of these cabinets were many little drawers, and each almost certainly held letters, tied with bows of ribbon, sprinkled with sticks of lavender or rose leaves. For it was another fact—if facts were what one wanted—that Isabella had known many people, had had many friends; and thus if one had the audacity to open a drawer and read her letters, one would find the traces of many agitations, of appointments to meet, of upbraidings for not having met, long letters of intimacy and affection, violent letters of jealousy and reproach, terrible final words of parting—for all those interviews and assignations had led to nothing—that is, she had never married, and yet, judging from the mask-like indifference of her face, she had gone through twenty times more of passion and experience than those whose loves are trumpeted forth for all the world to hear. Under the stress of thinking about Isabella, her room became more shadowy and symbolic; the corners seemed darker, the legs of chairs and tables more spindly and hieroglyphic.

Suddenly these reflections were ended violently and yet without a sound. A large black form loomed into the looking-glass; blotted out everything, strewed the table with a packet of marble tablets veined with pink and gray, and was gone. But the picture was entirely altered. For the moment it was unrecognizable and irrational and entirely out of focus. One could not relate these tablets to any human purpose. And then by degrees some logical process set to work on them and began ordering and arranging them and bringing them into the fold of common experience. One realized at last that they were merely letters. The man had brought the post.

There they lay on the marble-topped table, all dripping with light and color at first and crude and unabsorbed. And then it was strange to see how they were drawn in and arranged and composed and made part of the picture and granted that stillness and immortality which the looking-glass conferred. They lay there invested with a new reality and significance and with a greater heaviness too, as if it would have needed a chisel to dislodge them from the table. And, whether it was fancy or not, they seemed to have become not merely a handful of casual letters but to be tablets graven with eternal truth—if one could read them, one would know everything there was to be known about Isabella, yes, and about life too. The pages inside those marble-looking envelopes must be cut deep and scored thick with meaning. Isabella would come in, and take them, one by one, very slowly, and open them, and read them carefully word by word, and then with a profound sigh of comprehension, as if she had seen to the bottom of everything, she would tear the envelopes to little bits and tie the letters together and lock the

cabinet drawer in her determination to conceal what she did not wish to be known.

The thought served as a challenge. Isabella did not wish to be known—but she should no longer escape. It was absurd, it was monstrous. If she concealed so much and knew so much one must prize her open with the first tool that came to hand—the imagination. One must fix one's mind upon her at that very moment. One must fasten her down there. One must refuse to be put off any longer with sayings and doings such as the moment brought forth—with dinners and visits and polite conversations. One must put oneself in her shoes. If one took the phrase literally, it was easy to see the shoes in which she stood, down in the lower garden, at this moment. They were very narrow and long and fashionable—they were made of the softest and most flexible leather. Like everything she wore, they were exquisite. And she would be standing under the high hedge in the lower part of the garden, raising the scissors that were tied to her waist to cut some dead flower, some overgrown branch. The sun would beat down on her face, into her eyes; but no, at the critical moment a veil of cloud covered the sun, making the expression of her eyes doubtful—was it mocking or tender, brilliant or dull? One could only see the indeterminate outline of her rather faded, fine face looking at the sky. She was thinking, perhaps, that she must order a new net for the strawberries; that she must send flowers to Johnson's widow; that it was time she drove over to see the Hippesleys in their new house. Those were the things she talked about at dinner certainly. But one was tired of the things that she talked about at dinner. It was her profounder state of being that one wanted to catch and turn to words, the state that is to the mind what breathing is to the body, what one calls happiness or unhappiness. At the mention of those words it became obvious, surely, that she must be happy. She was rich; she was distinguished; she had many friends; she traveled—she bought rugs in Turkey and blue pots in Persia. Avenues of pleasure radiated this way and that from where she stood with her scissors raised to cut the trembling branches while the lacy clouds veiled her face.

Here with a quick movement of her scissors she snipped the spray of travelers' joy and it fell to the ground. As it fell, surely some light came in too, surely one could penetrate a little farther into her being. Her mind then was filled with tenderness and regret. . . . To cut an overgrown branch saddened her because it had once lived, and life was dear to her. Yes, and at the same time the fall of the branch would suggest to her how she must die herself and all the futility and evanescence of things. And then again quickly catching this thought up, with her instant good sense, she thought life had treated her well; even if fall she must, it was to lie on the earth and molder sweetly into the roots of violets. So she stood thinking. Without making any thought precise—for she was one of those reticent people whose minds hold their thoughts enmeshed in clouds of silence—she was filled with thoughts. Her mind was like her room, in which lights advanced and retreated, came pirouetting and stepping delicately, spread their tails, pecked their way; and then her whole being was suffused, like the room again, with a cloud of some profound knowledge, some unspoken regret, and then she was full of locked drawers, stuffed with letters, like her cabinets. To talk of "prizing her open" as if she were an oyster, to use any but the finest and subtlest and most pliable tools upon her was impious and absurd. One must imagine—here was she in the looking-glass. It made one start.

She was so far off at first that one could not see her clearly. She came lingering and pausing, here straightening a rose, there lifting a pink to smell it, but she never stopped; and all the time

she became larger and larger in the looking-glass, more and more completely the person into whose mind one had been trying to penetrate. One verified her by degrees—fitted the qualities one had discovered into this visible body. There were her gray-green dress, and her long shoes, her basket, and something sparkling at her throat. She came so gradually that she did not seem to derange the pattern in the glass, but only to bring in some new element which gently moved and altered the other objects as if asking them, courteously, to make room for her. And the letters and the table and the grass walk and the sunflowers which had been waiting in the looking-glass separated and opened out so that she might be received among them. At last there she was, in the hall. She stopped dead. She stood by the table. She stood perfectly still. At once the looking-glass began to pour over her a light that seemed to fix her; that seemed like some acid to bite off the unessential and superficial and to leave only the truth. It was an enthralling spectacle. Everything dropped from her—clouds, dress, basket, diamond—all that one had called the creeper and convolvulus. Here was the hard wall beneath. Here was the woman herself. She stood naked in that pitiless light. And there was nothing. Isabella was perfectly empty. She had no thoughts. She had no friends. She cared for nobody. As for her letters, they were all bills. Look, as she stood there, old and angular, veined and lined, with her high nose and her wrinkled neck, she did not even trouble to open them.

People should not leave looking-glasses hanging in their rooms.

SONNET

BY SHAEMAS O'SHEEL

YOUR other lovers? What are they to me?
When has a star been ravished from the skies
By all the rapt millenniums of eyes?
What keel has stolen a splendor from the sea?
Not only I upon a windy hill
Have stood bareheaded, calling April fair
When she flings blossoms slanting down the air.
Who shall forbid the brimming cup to spill?

Indeed these fools can never do me wrong
Who, thinking that they know you, never guess
The swift, elusive, reticent loveliness
You show me in the silence under the song;
And though they pluck your rose they have my scorn,
For only on my brow you press the thorn.

RELIGION WITHOUT GOD?

THE LIMITATIONS OF HUMANISM

BY HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

IN INTELLECTUAL importance the most considerable religious movement recently set afoot is humanism. Self-conscious adherents may not as yet be numerous, but many of our "best minds" are plainly humanistic, the major positions of the movement accord with current thinking, and already various groups of avowed humanists are bidding for popular recognition and support.

In so far as humanism has become deliberate, it may be described as the endeavor to keep the best spiritual values of religion while surrendering any theological interpretation of the universe. To be sure, humanism is a fluid term and in some of its meanings represents ideas to which any Christian could give hearty assent, but specifically the word is claimed by those who, like a recent exponent, say, "The belief in God and the belief in immortality are gone."

Such humanists—and it is with such that this essay deals—are sure of goodness, truth, and beauty; are confident that in the experience and creation of these spiritual values human life finds its distinctive meaning, and that in any sort of universe, theistic or materialistic, with God or without him, the center and circumference of human worth must lie in the personal exploration of these values and the creation of a society which incarnates them.

Evangelical preachers commonly draw forbidding pictures of life's Saharan waste when faith in God departs, but the humanists will have none of that. They not only give up God; the more jubilant of them are glad to be rid of him. At least they are sure that faith in God has had its dangerous disadvantages. Men have trusted God instead of scientifically mastering nature's law-abiding forces and achieving their ends by their own knowledge and skill. Men have made of God a place of soft retreat, imagining themselves in "the everlasting arms" when they should have been grappling with life's realities. Men have laid on God the responsibility of having made the world in the first place and of carrying it on to a successful issue, whereas, so humanists think, nobody made the world and nobody will make a success of it if we do not. From all reliance on superhuman aid the humanist turns away. He essays a definite and final break, not from an old to a new theology, but from any theology to none at all. He draws a circle around man's spiritual life, personal and social, on this planet and proposes that religion shall stay at home within that compass and mind its business.

No one, however deep his instinctive prejudice against humanism, or his reasoned objection to it, should underrate its appeal. Its appearance now is no accident. It focuses a large amount of modern thought. It seems to its adherents—as ideas congenial with the Zeitgeist always seem—the inevitable corollary of intelligence. From Roman Catholicism to Protestantism to liberalism to humanism appears to them the predestined path of religious progress.

The humanist counts his advantages with gusto and gratitude and becomes missionary in his desire to share them with his fellows. The conflict between science and religion is over for him. He can even outdo the scientists in accepting a thoroughgoing mechanistic world-view. Ascribing the theism of physicists like Eddington, Millikan, and Michael Pupin to departmentalized and unco-ordinated minds, he can take it for granted that the universe is a vast, physical machine of one kind or another and that, anyway, religion is not concerned with the nature of it.

The psychological attack on religion passes him by. According to that, religion is an array of comforting wish-fulfilments by which we cushion this intolerably ruthless universe. If folk cannot endure life as it really is they can imaginatively shape it nearer to their hearts' desire by supposing that God is good, that he cares for them, and that heaven lies ahead. This alluring dream-world the humanist throws away. He has girded himself courageously to face reality and he thinks he knows it for what it is—ruthless, careless of personality, making and unmaking us with equal apathy, and at its best neutral in the struggle for spiritual values. At which point, instead of being crushed, he feels liberated and challenged to play the man and, if there be no other life, "Pitch this one high!"

The humanist, therefore, is often tonic and stimulating. He can write high-minded books like Mr. Walter Lippmann's *A Preface to Morals* with strong popular appeal, in which those who, like the author, have been disillusioned about the nature of the universe are, nevertheless, encouraged to find spiritual values here and causes worth disinterested service.

In particular, humanism has the allurement currently associated with anything which is not too optimistic. Whatever to-day is cheering and hopeful is in so far suspect. In novel, drama, or essay on philosophy, only when one is unpleasantly realistic and grim, when one faces the seamy side, considers ugly facts, and in general appears afraid of no unpalatable conclusion does one have the accent of truth. Put side by side a typical sentence of Browning, "God! Thou art love! I build my faith on that," and a sentence from Bertrand Russell, "Omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way," and even if no time had been given to serious thought about the relative merits of the conflicting philosophies, the second would sound to many modern ears more solid. At least, Bertrand Russell cannot be accused of fooling himself with desirable optimisms, and Browning can.

This advantage of saying forthrightly that the universe cares no more for us than the climate does for the pine trees humanism possesses. It is manifestly the credo of folks who are not spoofing.

II

Nevertheless, many who are as anxious to avoid spoofing as the sternest humanist are persuaded that humanism in the end will prove a tentative makeshift. No matter how glamorously the immediate spiritual values in man's experience are played up, and how rousingly we, biological accidents in a purposeless universe, are challenged to pitch this life high, the plain fact is that the universe is not negligible, that humanists have their theory, however disguised, about its nature and meaning, and that the logical implications of that theory are bound to become explicit.

The world-view on which the sort of humanism now under discussion is based is not, in the old sense, materialistic. The humanists of course are far too intelligent not to know that whatever matter may turn out to be it is much less simple than the pebbly atoms of which the cosmos once was supposed to be constructed. But they do start with a universe basically non-psychical, non-personal, non-spiritual. In its creative elements, however physics may ulti-

mately describe them, the universe in their eyes is neither intelligent, purposive, nor friendly. All such attributes, excepting their presence in the animals, are exclusively human; they exist only within ourselves who happen to be alive upon the earth, and they reveal nothing about the nature of the cosmos outside of us. If we suppose they do, the humanist says, we are only clothing the naked physics of the world with our fantasies.

If one argue that the universe does apparently care for personality in the sense at least that it has produced personality, maintains it, and provides the sustenance and circumstance for its progressive achievement, the answer of the humanist is ready. The universe is to us as the sea is to the fish that live in it. The sea has indeed furnished conditions favorable to their emergence but it does not care for them. Purposively speaking, they are an accident. So far as the sea's interest is concerned, their death and birth are equally fortuitous, and the ocean is as apathetic to the extinction of a whole species as to its emergence.

In a cosmos thus negligent of human values personality has evolved and will ultimately perish—such is the basic philosophy on which non-theistic humanism proposes to erect a "high religion."

III

That misgivings are in order about such a creedal basis for religion seems clear. For humanism does not avoid a creed—its basic theory of the universe is non-theistic—and at this point of doctrine, humanism, like many another religion, faces peril. If it could remain a movement of protest merely, attacking the ignorance of orthodoxy, the compromises of liberalism, and the weak and silly uses to which great ideas like "God" have familiarly been put, it might continue to sweep the intelligent into its stream. But the logic of events is too much for it; it is compelled increasingly to reveal its own philosophy, to become in its turn not an assailer of others' doctrines but a defender of its own; and the creed which humanists so easily assume is not by any means so easily defensible.

To begin at the most obvious point, the attitude of nonchalance toward the universe, as though so long as we have our spiritual values here the nature of the cosmos does not matter, is a pose which cannot permanently be maintained, much less be made the basis of a high religion. To be sure, the endeavor of the humanists to sustain an eager idealism despite the senseless and purposeless nature of their universe is admirable. One's faith in humankind is strengthened whenever men, facing an undesirable estate, tighten their belts to make the best of it; and this the humanists do. Unable to accept theism, in any of its forms, failing to discover in the cosmic process intelligence, purpose, or goodwill, they propose to take what they find standing up, not lying down. Man may be only "the disease of the agglutinated dust," but, the humanist would say, Accept the odds, be indifferent to the uneven chances of the human microcosm in the ruthless macrocosm and play the game while it lasts. All of which is high-spirited and chivalrous, but the logic of the situation will prove too much, even for such a gallant pose.

The universe is not negligible. It is insistently present, obviously immense; whatever reality is at the heart of it is the determiner of destiny. Gestures of nonchalance in the face of it are not appropriate. Repeated often enough, they begin to lose their glamour of gallantry and to become funny.

The humanist is frequently amused at the Christian. Living in a cosmos so vast that light from extra-galactic nebulæ has been traveling 186,000 miles a second for over 140,000,000 years to reach us, the Christian, nevertheless, believes with Haldane of Cambridge, that "personality is the great central fact of the universe." This seems

to the humanist amusing. The emergence of personality, he thinks, is a fortuitous incident on a midget planet lost in the immensities of stellar space, and Christian faith in the primacy of personality involves an utter and even humorous lack of perspective.

The Christian, on the other hand, may well discover the humor of the situation in the humanist rather than in himself. For a tiny microcosm to face this vast macrocosm with a gesture of nonchalance is, after all, sheer posing. It is striking an attitude which becomes the more incongruous the longer one watches it. If ever a religious movement whistled to keep its courage up—and many of them have—humanism does it when it proposes as a basic credo that the universe is neither intelligent, purposive, nor friendly, that it made us by accident and will annihilate us by necessity, but that, after all, this does not matter, that we should be disinterested about it and indifferent to it, and should proceed with eager devotion to construct a high religion.

Already the nemesis of such an attitude comes on apace. Even while Mr. Lippmann was writing his *A Preface to Morals* Mr. Joseph Krutch was writing *The Modern Temper*. It is, I think, the most thoroughgoing statement of the implications of atheism that we have. It is written by a man who is done with gestures of indifference toward the cosmos and is determined to carry his philosophy through to its logical conclusions.

What Mr. Krutch sees, the humanist movement as a whole will ultimately have to see. Whenever anybody takes the mechanistic naturalism of modern science as a complete account of all reality, he has a universe basically physical and, therefore, quantitative. He may call the creative elements electrons, mass-points, energy-units, or what-not, but they are quantitative: they can be measured in terms of force and motion. The real world, however, in which we experientially live, is also qualitative. The loveliness of landscapes, the freshness of morning in the mountains, color, taste, harmony, and affections of friendship, the lure of ideals, the thrill of discovered truth, faith in the spiritual significance of life—such qualitative experiences give human existence its worth. But if the universe is basically physical and quantitative all such experiences are subjective fantasies; they exist only in and for ourselves; all of them are clothing which we have cut and fitted according to our own desires to dress this naked world; the cosmos itself has no quality, knows nothing of it in any form, cares nothing for it; as Mr. Krutch says, "Living is merely a physiological process with only a physiological meaning."

In the world, therefore, which nontheistic humanism presupposes, it is not simply religion that logically must go; all idealism, as well, of whatever kind, is our subjective fantasy. Mr. Krutch states, I think unanswerably, the clean sweep which thoroughgoing thought must make of any logical warrant for our qualitative life in such a world. Man, he writes, has "no reason to suppose that his own life has any more meaning than the life of the humblest insect that crawls from one annihilation to another." In such a world the more men and nations rise in the moral scale, the worse off they are because the more alien they become to the utterly quantitative cosmos in which they live, so that all spiritual excellence is ultimately suicidal. In such a world the romantic glamour that we have thrown around love and friendship is as much a compensatory mirage as is our faith in God; and our conceptions of chivalric honor and sacrificial devotion are as illogical as our hopes of heaven. In such a world even science can suggest nothing better to Mr. Krutch than a chapter on "The Disillusion with the Laboratory." In a word, the assumption that the cosmos is basically quantitative means that all the qualitative aspects of our lives are subjective fantasy, and the upshot of that situation thoroughly faced is, I suspect, what Mr. Krutch says it is,

"moral nihilism which is fatal to society or that spiritual despair which falls upon the individual victim of an all-embracing materialistic philosophy."

I do not mean that multiplying disciples of Mr. Krutch would be healthy for society. Far better to have men flock to the humanists! For the humanists are fortunately illogical. They assail certain religious aspects of men's qualitative life, failing to see that they have embraced a theory which takes the warrant from man's qualitative life throughout and makes it all a pathetic wish-fulfilment of alien organisms stranded in a merely quantitative world. One turns from them to salute the logic of one of our foremost scientists who, holding the basic position on which humanism rests, said to a friend of mine, "The most tragic event in the history of the universe is that man should ever have become conscious of himself."

After all, the genesis of humanism is not difficult to see. In a generation when the older forms of theism have gone to pieces, men of high spirit and devoted enthusiasms cannot because of that stop living well. Therefore, they have dared an attitude, ventured a pose as the only immediate recourse at hand in their emergency. They have said, Let theism go; God or no God, the good life may still be ours. As a temporary stance in a theologically slippery generation, one may not only understand that but respect it. At least, it is far better to stand there than to fall down utterly. But it is no permanent stopping place. The illogicality of the position is already clear, even to the vanguard of those who hold its theory. If we are ultimately to save the qualitative life of man, the way through is not a tentative humanism but a reconstructed and improved theism.

IV

The difficulty of maintaining the humanistic pose with any self-content becomes even more clear when one considers the intellectual cul-de-sacs into which its basic credo leads. The mental process by which the humanistic philosophy is reached is clear. First, one splits the cosmos in two with "us" on one side and the "not us" on the other. Second, one assumes that by the subtle organization of its substance, the "not us" produced "us," so that we are the result of structuralized physical elements. Third, one assumes that the physical and biological sciences, by their analysis of the "not us," are getting back to the creative factors, molecules, atoms, electrons, protons, or what-not, whose various combinations make everything from stellar systems to the cortex of the human brain. Fourth, one assumes that the "not us" has done all this blindly, without anything that can be called intelligence or purpose, blundering up from star dust to man. Finally, one discovers oneself in a world where our human spirits with their conscious experience of intelligence, love, hope, faith, and aspiration, are surrounded by a vast, unconscious universe of which our spiritual values reveal nothing and to which they mean nothing. In such a situation, where, as one man put it, "we must make the best of a bad mess," humanism rises to assure us that all is not lost and that it is still possible to be nonchalant about the cosmos and high-minded in the midst of it.

To say that such a mental process fairly bristles with difficulties is to put the case mildly.

For example, behind the glowing calls of the humanists to spiritual quality and social service there is one prevailing picture of the universe: in the beginning force—non-moral, non-purposive, unintelligent force—from the blind combinations of whose energy-units the physical cosmos, its biological organisms, and its human personalities have emerged. Theoretically there are other alternatives to theism, but practically the overwhelming proportion of non-theistic minds to-day become not pantheists, panpsychists, nor monists, but mechanistic naturalists. Often they do not

call themselves that. Often they do not know what they are. But when one penetrates the fog of current humanism's philosophical uncertainties one generally finds, explicit or assumed, the world-view of the mechanistic naturalists. They reduce the world of spiritual values to the functioning of human personality; they reduce personality to its organism; they reduce the organism to its component physical elements; they posit behind these physical elements a world of energy-units working in mechanistic patterns—and then, slyly ascribing to these energy-units the attributes necessary to produce everything from solar systems to Christ, they accept the result as a causal explanation of the cosmos. As a matter of fact, by that process they have explained nothing; they merely have analyzed something.

The real problem of the cosmos is the whole cosmos, including man, his spiritual experience, scientific achievements, and social progress, his enriching ideals and faiths; and to abstract from this cosmic total, first, all spiritual life, then all biological organism, then all visible elements, until, left with hypothetical energy-units, we endow them with the causal capacity fortuitously to get together into the cosmic total we started with, may for certain purposes be useful analysis but it assuredly is a naïve philosophy.

When applied, for example, to an individual like William Shakespere, this method of explanation by abstraction reveals its over-simple nature. For, first, we must abstract from the total fact of Shakespere the rich intellectual and spiritual world in which he thought he lived, and must call that the functioning and, in part, the fantasy of his personality. Then we must abstract further the conscious, creative mental life of Shakespere, reducing it all, after the manner of the extreme behaviorists, to the activity of his physical organism. Then we must abstract his organism also, reducing that to its component cells, some seventy kilograms of material, getting rid of which in turn by another abstraction, we shall have left hypothetical energy-units whose fortunate though fortuitous combination was responsible for "Hamlet."

Obviously, this is not a process of explanation at all, but a process of abstraction; it is a clever way of pretending to deal with a problem by getting rid of it. Yet this same mental procedure is involved in the popular world-view which to-day obsesses the imagination of many, even among the intelligentsia.

One does not mean that the humanists are to be blamed for not having solved the problem of causation. Nobody has solved it. The theist least of all would claim to have answered adequately such ultimate philosophical questions. But the humanist is to be blamed for assuming a solution, taking it for granted as a matter of course, constructing a religion on the basis of it, and calling the result, as one of the humanists does, "the only possible kind of religion for all modern men." If such dogmatism may be matched on the other side, I should venture to be sure that no theory which represents the universe as merely *pushed up* from below by its own component energy-units without *pull* akin to intelligent purpose to supply pattern or structure can ever permanently hold the philosophic field.

Humanism is easily understandable on practical grounds. It is precisely what the humanists charge Christianity with being—an escape-mechanism. It is a refuge from a difficult situation, a demand born out of passionate human need that life shall be worthful no matter what the cosmic truth may be. As such, one sympathizes with it. One even rejoices that men and women who are unable to believe in God can yet believe in the good life and courageously undertake to live it. In Dean Sperry's figure, they are like folk who, finding that the great theistic systems have suffered shipwreck, have taken to the lifeboats; and while one recognizes that a lifeboat is a temporary recourse and

not a permanent establishment, one is glad to see that for the time being they are still afloat.

Indeed, humanism in its practical import deserves much more positive appreciation. Religion in America does desperately need to be humanized. The most appalling thing about some of our churches is that they are not interested in spiritual life. They are concerned with theological opinions, liturgical observances, sectarian partitions; but spiritual life is largely outside their regime. For spiritual life in our communities includes fine music, playspaces for the children, good drama, adequate schools, beautiful homes. It counts nothing that is human alien to it. Whatever elevates life, beautifies it with significance, makes its appreciation of nature keener, its happiness in art richer, its moral practices more wholesome, its social relationships more humane is spiritual. Whatever gives men creative joy in their work, redeems life from drudgery and baptizes it with purposeful meaning is spiritual. Wherever men find in life not simply things that serve them but values which they serve, so that they are ennobled by devotion, purified by a real and inward worship of the Divine made concrete in an experience of goodness, truth, or beauty, they are winning spiritual life. From individuals enslaved under carnal and sordid tastes to our secular civilization now being woven by the all-powerful machine, humanity above all else needs thus to be lifted into spiritual life. This, says the humanist, is the function of religion.

If this were humanism's primary meaning, what intelligent man would not support it? If this were humanism's exclusive meaning, who would not proudly bear its name?

When, therefore, one of the wiser humanists says of his movement that it "is not necessarily antitheistic" we eagerly agree. We assert further that it would better not be antitheistic. The antitheism of current humanism is its least defensible point. For humanists traveling that road come face to face with all the difficulties which materialism, however sublimated, has always faced, and in the end they will find themselves not primarily engaged in spiritualizing life but in defending an extraordinarily credulous creed.

Of course, what all humanists desire to escape is supernaturalism, but in this they have the cordial agreement of a great body of theists. Supernaturalism is an obsolete word and it stands for an obsolete idea. Its history displays its irrelevancy to modern thought. Starting with a whimsical world, where everything that occurred was the direct volition of a human or an extrahuman agent, mankind has laboriously discovered a natural world, observed its regularities, plotted its laws, and as one area after another has thus been naturalized, the supernatural inevitably has shrunk. It has become the limbo of the as yet inexplicable, a concept with which we cover our ignorance. The partition of our world into a natural order overlaid by a supernatural order which keeps breaking through is to a well-instructed mind impossible.

When, however, the humanist and the theist together have thus got rid of the false distinction—natural versus supernatural—they still have on their hands the real distinction—physical versus spiritual. Both physical things and spiritual values are actually here. They are indisputable facts. Something must be done with them. Can it be that physical things alone are basically real and creative, and that spiritual values are epiphenomenal—casual, inexplicable, subjective accidents, revelatory of nothing beyond themselves? That is the creed to which antitheistic humanism is consenting. It would better not consent. There are rough seas ahead of that philosophy.

V

The most serious difficulty with humanism is that it undercuts the very

thing it tries to do. It seriously desires to save the good life in a godless world and it wishes to pitch that life in a high key. When the humanist talks ethics, the modern Christian finds himself listening to a familiar tune in which he easily can join. Like the religious liberal, the humanist maintains old virtues, which in every generation have enriched personality, and pleads for fresh ventures of the moral sense in situations where "new occasions teach new duties."

Indeed, deprived of God, with nothing left from the race's heritage of idealistic philosophy and religious faith except the good life, humanists do sometimes so specialize in that and give creative thought to it that they render distinguished service in the very field where on *a priori* grounds the theist expects to see them fail. For this reason one of our professorial agnostics wishes that we could declare a moratorium on God for forty years and see if without theology we might not be morally improved. One who is himself a theist would better take to heart such current distrust of theism's ethical consequence. The influence of much of our popular belief in God is not moral but immoral. It means a lazy shouldering off on a kindly deity of tasks we must perform ourselves. It means stereotyped concepts of right and wrong, defined by infallible revelation and unadjustable to new demands. It, therefore, anesthetizes its devotees and checks instead of encourages creative thought on personal and social morals. The humanists are right in much of their attack on current theism and the theist would better be the first to acknowledge it.

Nevertheless, the matter is not so simple that it can be disposed of by the humanist's moratorium on God. Ultimately an ethic of high ideals supported with enthusiastic and unflagging devotion does not depend on the supernatural dictation of a code or on a system of divine rewards and punishments, or on a picture of God as king, lawgiver, and judge, or on infallible authority in church or Bible, or on anything else against which the humanist launches his favorite attack, but it does depend on reverence for personality. There is the crux of the whole matter. Right and wrong are basically a scale of values; ideas concerning them depend on what the individual and the society he lives in regard as valuable; and ultimately morals, considering how persons should live in an intermeshing network of personal relationships, depend on personality's worth.

Nor is it possible to boom the worth of personality by willing it, to insist that it shall be worthful though the heavens fall. No fiat-value can be created in personality by any humanist's edict. Here he must take the consequences of his cosmic creed; here in spite of himself the background of his thought crowds up into the foreground. Personality a fortuitous by-product of a careless universe, its mental and spiritual life revealing nothing beyond itself, its finest faiths comforting fantasies by which it escapes from the world of fact to the world of desire, its source self-motivating energy-units, its history an interlude between two annihilations, its ultimate future without hope—so in his basic philosophy the non-theistic humanist rates personality. To suppose that such an estimate has no ethical repercussions is incredible. They may be postponed in the individual humanist but they will ultimately emerge out of his movement as a whole.

Indeed they already are emerging. The same generation which sees humanism positing a godless world and trying to preserve the good life in it sees increasing numbers of people in the same godless world drawing logical conclusions as to its meaning. Our modern novelists say forthrightly what they think. One of them almost is persuaded that he is "only a bundle of cellular matter upon its way to become manure." Writes another, "We don't matter. Man matters only to himself.

He is fighting a lone fight against a vast indifference." Our modern essayists are not reticent about the corollaries of a godless world. Writes Mr. Krutch, "Ours is a lost cause and there is no place for us in the natural universe." Even Mr. Lippmann, when in a burst of confidence he canvasses the possibilities of personal meaning in the cosmos as he sees it, says that life may be a "comedy, or high tragedy, or plain farce."

It should be noted that all such judgments do not primarily concern God; they concern human personality. They move in the same realm where ethics move. They interpenetrate a man's estimate of himself and of the whole world of persons. They drag the creed of humanism out of the realm of cosmic theory into the realm of the good life, which humanists wish to maintain. Here lies the impossibility of a successful humanism: it sucks the egg of personality's value and then tries to hatch a high religion out of it.

One device by which this consequence is warded off is the attempt to hold a milder and more tolerable opinion of the physical universe's relationship to man. Instead of emphasizing Bertrand Russell's thoroughgoing view of the situation, "Brief and powerless is Man's life; on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark," some humanists prefer to call the cosmos neutral. It assumes in their imagination an almost benign aspect as though, providing the setting for the human game, furnishing the material with which the game may be played, and laying down the rules, it stood aside to let individuals in particular and the race in general win if they can. In such a view as this, however, the human fantasy is obviously at work elaborating its wish-fulfilments. For whatever words may legitimately be used to describe the relationship of the cosmos with man, neutrality is not among them. If human personality is a trivial incident in the history of the colossal macrocosm, the macrocosm will not in the end be neutral in dealing with man's cherished interests and values. Against the background of stellar time, the rise and dissolution of solar systems is like the freezing and melting of seasonal ice on earthly rivers; and so far from being able to trust the cosmos for benignant neutrality, the thoroughgoing non-theistic mind must foresee the ultimate disintegration of everything that man has hoped or planned. "Nothing will remain," says one frank scientist, "not even the ruins." In such a world our personal values are our subjective writing on the cosmic slate, and in the end the universe will wipe them off and then smash the slate.

The humanist's non-theistic picture of the cosmos, therefore, necessarily involves a value-judgment about man. Say as one will that what man is he is, whatever may be his cosmic origin, and that the worth of personality is an empirical fact to be discovered by experiment, it still is true that if one starts with the judgment that basically "personality is the great central fact of the universe," one moves out to a corresponding level of expectation, but that if one starts with the judgment that basically "living is merely a physiological process with only a physiological meaning," one naturally moves out to another level altogether.

This, as I understand it, is what belief in God is all about. We are not anxious concerning God because, for its own sake, we hunger and thirst after a cosmic theory. Multitudes do not so hunger in the least, and few of us do much of the time. What does matter to us, however, day in and day out, is the value of personality. How much we ourselves are ultimately worth, what possibilities we may reasonably believe resident in human personality at large, whether the progress already observable from the Neanderthal man up is a trifling cosmic incident or is prophetic of resident potentialities in man's spiritual life with divine resources behind them—this is an intimate, penetrating matter which affects daily living. To

say that personality is the child of the Eternal Spirit, in very truth the great central fact of the universe, is one thing; to say that personality is a chance spark struck off from physical collisions is another. Let no humanist content himself with pretense in this matter: that difference involves prodigious ethical results.

Nor may this difficulty be avoided by the substitution of agnosticism for atheism. Maybe God is, some humanists would say, maybe not; concerning that be disinterested; in the meantime we have the good life. Such agnosticism, however, does not escape the question of personality's value. No one can be altogether agnostic about that. "What a man believes," writes George Bernard Shaw, "may be ascertained not from his creed, but from the assumptions on which he habitually acts." Now, no assumptions on which we habitually act are more unavoidable than the estimates of human value that interpenetrate our conduct. From our treatment of our children to our belief about the possibility of ending war, attitudes toward personality, estimates of it, and convictions concerning it consciously or unconsciously enter into our behavior. On one side are those who think that when human history is finished it will prove to have been "a brief and transitory episode in the life of one of the meanest of the planets." On the other side are those who think that man is a child of God, with the possibilities and destinies which that involves. In between are the humanists, trying to keep foothold on both positions, endeavoring to combine a high estimate of life's spiritual worth and eventual significance with the positive belief or the strong suspicion that personality is a casual phenomenon like phosphorescence in the sea. It is not an easy position to maintain. God is not so readily got rid of without being missed.

One thing the humanist tries to forget but must in the end remember: theism is a value-judgment as to the worth and meaning of personality.

To be sure, current popular theism cannot be maintained. The old theistic systems are indeed going to pieces. Many of the hymns, sermons, admonitions, rituals, and liturgies which sprang out of them are already in the eyes and ears of the intelligent obsolete, save as, like the stories of the Greek pantheon, they are given poetic interpretation. The final answer which the theist must make to the humanist is not complaint against the tentative unsatisfactoriness of his position, but the positive presentation of a credible idea of God. In the meantime, amid the mass of undigested factual material which modern religion faces, the thoughtful theist knows that he often appears vague in his idea of deity. He frankly despairs of tossing off on demand a statement of theism philosophically adequate to this new amazing universe. He sees in that task work for many minds demanding more than one generation, but he is still convinced that atheism is no solution of the problem and that behind our partial and inadequate ideas of God is God.

Were I personally to lose that confidence, undoubtedly I should try to be a humanist. Finding the cosmos in that case so basically irrational, I should face with equanimity being irrational myself. I should do my best to say that even when all spiritual meaning is banished from ultimate reality, and the things that we love best—friendship, poetry, science, societies that grow in humaneness and goodwill—are seen as trivial incidents in the colossal onrush of the cosmos, it still is better to love those values and find one's life in their service. I should honestly endeavor to be a courageous humanist, counting it craven to let even an antagonistic universe dissuade me from decency, justice, and goodwill. But in hours of lucid insight when I grasped the full-orbed meaning of the idea that the determiner of destiny is altogether physical, no more aware of our human values than are the stars of the Big Dipper that they look to us like a human instrument, I should

be a far-from-enthusiastic humanist. Not that I expect any God there is to nurse me here or furnish me a diadem hereafter! On any sane philosophy this universe is engaged in a business too vast to be solicitous about merely individual desires. But in a world basically quantitative, not individual desires alone, supra-individual personal values—goodness, truth, beauty—are denied any cosmic rootage and are left to find what nourishment they can without it, assured that in the end they all will perish in the planet's decease. In such a world I know that the level of my ideals for human life inevitably would sink. I should attempt less and expect less. Recognizing all our qualitative experience as transient foliage with which we clothe the bare rock of a quantitative world, it would be impossible to keep the grim, craggy fact from showing through. I should know beyond a peradventure that the spiritual heroes whose faith and sacrifice have lifted and illumined our humanity never could have built their lives on that hypothesis. And there would be hours when I, a humanist, would pray to the God I no longer believed in to help theists so credibly to rebuild theism that humanists might disappear.

INCIDENT

BY JAMES B. GITLITZ

WE TALKED of trivial things, and all the while
I tried to utter what I had to say;
But I could only force an empty smile
To deck some inane comment on the day;
You lay upon the grass, all unaware
That such a thing as grief could ever be,
The spray of lilacs in your hands a dare
For me to shatter their tranquillity.

And that was long ago—so long ago
That now the lilacs are in bloom again
And there is not a place where I may go
But they confront me with their calm disdain;
For now—I never see a lilac spray
But I recall how still and white you lay.

IN TANGIER

A STORY

BY MARY HEATON VORSE

FOR nearly twenty years I have thought about this story, trying to find its solution—trying to crowd the story of Magdalena, of Paul Hollinger, and Fadma the Turkish girl into a recognizable pattern. There is no pattern into which they fit. There are only some facts leading to a final interrogation point. After these years I have found no clue which might lead to an answer. There is nothing to be done but to record what I know against the sights and sounds of Morocco of twenty years ago.

I learned their history from the Consul in Tangier. I even took a shadowy part in their inexplicable romance when I visited Fadma, Hollinger's widow, and again when I put a price on Magdalena's clothes in the Consulate.

Yet though the story has no pattern, though I have never seen Magdalena Gomez, I know what she looked like. I know her character as intimately as though she had made me some deep confidence. I know, too, the outstanding facts of her amazing story, then the door closes, leaving only unanswered questions.

It was by accident that I crossed from Gibraltar to Tangier, and the events of the first day still return to me shockingly. One does not lightly turn back two thousand years. I stepped from the calm of the long pier to the brawling street where a river of people was churning down a bed of stones.

The sudden confusion and noise dazed me, but as I made my difficult way through the crowd I was overwhelmed by the sense of being among people of another age whose feet were moving to the rhythm of past generations, to whom our motives and thoughts were as mysterious as theirs to us. Though I moved among them and jostled them, for me there was a quality of illusion in those first hours in Morocco, as if through some trick I had stepped into a Biblical picture.

The torrent of people started at the *suk*, the marketplace, and continued in volume to the harbor, widening a little at the *socco chico* where Europeans sat drinking in cafés. Comic-opera Europeans—remittance men, bad men, people who wished to avoid people, people whose families wished to get rid of them. An incredible assembly.

All day this stream of creatures rushed down the hill, beasts and humans, donkeys and mules, men on horses, men afoot, men dressed in short white *djellabas* and brown *djellabas*, men in dignified flowing robes and pale-lemon slippers. Women's figures, silent, enormous, white, scudding along on crimson feet.

The strangeness of the country, the very smells of the street, the reek of the *suk*, the penetrating unmistakable odor of the East overwhelmed me. Everything was changed: the look on people's faces, the motivation of life. The very colors, the soft yellows and reds and greens of the East, bemused one's eyes.

Later, I stood on the flat roof of the hotel piazza which ran in a platform

without balustrade around the *fondak* beneath, full of donkeys and dark, turbaned men, feeling the tide of this land rising higher and higher above me and swamping me, blotting out my reality, and leaving in me the feeling of having wandered off into legend, my personality gone.

It was at that moment I ran into the Consul, a slender young man in a pith helmet and the most immaculate of riding clothes. A good-looking young man with gray eyes set far apart. A hero of romance. Certainly a young man strayed into the realm where Haroun-el-raschid walked incognito, and where Djinn answered to a rub on an old lamp.

He'd come to Morocco for three weeks. How long had he been there? Two years, three years? I don't know. It seems that he had first been vice consul. Then gradually, the other diplomatic officers had been taken away by disaster or chance from this extraterritorial district, until this young man from Davenport, Iowa, was America's sole representative.

He was ruler for the time being, the highest diplomatic official of a great country with judiciary power over all American citizens. And this for a young man dropping, so to speak, from the lap of the Middle West. Talk about Aladdin! For the moment this young man *was* Aladdin, only an Aladdin who told his tales not in the language of Scheherazade, but rather in that of Mr. Rudyard Kipling. As if he were mothered by the *Arabian Nights* and fathered by the *Plain Tales from the Hills*.

The acting Consul General is a man of power. Anything can happen to him. Offers of bribes come to him in all forms from finding a fat sheep slaughtered on the Consulate doorsill, a purse of gold left on the desk, or subtle suggestions as to a present of a Sudanese slave girl of fourteen summers. Anything can happen . . . literally anything. The affairs of all the Americans are his.

We had exchanged the usual politenesses, when after a pause, he said:

"I wonder if you'd care for a walk to the Consulate with me. I've got to free a slave!" He brought it out casually, but I could see a bright, triumphant look in his eyes as I echoed as if to order, "Free a slave?"

"I'm always having to free slaves," he lamented in a bored tone. "Slaves of American citizens, Sudanese slave girls," he explained. "Of course it's against the law for an American citizen to own slaves; so whenever I find out about one I have to call them to account for it and free the slaves—read them the Emancipation Proclamation." He pronounced it with subdued relish.

"And then what happens?"

"Oh, they go back to their owners. What else is there for them to do? They always go back. They don't even know they're free! Freeing slaves is a darned nuisance." He explained, incidentally, that this especial slave had belonged to a man named Hollinger. Paul Hollinger, who had recently died in Tangier.

"They say he died of typhoid," the Consul said. "What he really died of was a broken heart. He couldn't get over Magdalena's, his wife's, death. The old woman is *her* slave. Hollinger certainly made a mess of it." He paused for me to ask my inevitable question:

"What was the mess?"

"Well, it's about all his wives. When his Mexican wife died in Constantinople, coming back from the pilgrimage to Mecca, he married a young Turkish girl, Fadma; and now his American heirs want his money. But his last one, this Turkish girl, was legally married to him too. She is going to have a baby. I wish," he added impulsively, "you'd go to see her. I'd like her to feel that there was a white woman around who'd look after her. She's so totally alone."

We walked through the maze of silent streets leading to the Consulate. Winding streets, blank blue-painted walls, doors of darker blue; narrow streets where one moved in a blue shadow as

though in some mysterious medium that was neither air nor water, but which partook of both. Always a stealthy white figure moving silently around a corner. Glimpses here and there of courtyards, but for the most part silence, secrecy, blank walls, with a mysterious life going on behind them.

We halted before a wide archway above which was a shield with the American arms. A Moroccan soldier lolled before the entrance, teasing a toothless old man, who, I learned later, was a eunuch who ran errands for the Consul. The soldier came to some sort of attention. We passed the courtyard and went through wide rooms which had an aspect of important officialdom.

A little black woman in voluminous white was huddled in her chair. Her face was lined with wrinkles, and she slid her eyes around until the whites showed as the Emancipation Proclamation was read her. The solemn Syrian interpreter was called.

"Ask her if she understands that she's free," said the Consul. An expression of extraordinary craft crossed her face which was wrinkled like a monkey's. With infinite cautionings and hushings, with promises to respect her secrecy, she told the Consul that Hollinger's Moorish servant had been robbing the Turkish girl, Fadma, taking jewelry and clothes, and he'd kill her if he knew she told. "He steal my mistress' things that belong to the white bird."

"Now," said the Consul in mock annoyance as though the whole thing were not the very stuff of his life, "now I suppose I shall have to put that rascal Mohammed on the carpet. I never have trusted him!"

The freed slave arose. She kissed the hem of the Consul's coat and slipped away, her red slippers making no sound. A shaft of afternoon sun slid in through the large windows. There was quiet about us, but from far off came the noise of a tom-tom played in a disquieting double syncopation. The Consul watched her go.

"I've never understood that story," he said. "I've never understood about Hollinger and Magdalena Gomez. See if you can unravel it." From his point of view, the most difficult part was to reconcile Paul Hollinger's romance with his background, which was what he called "Old Knickerbocker."

Hollinger had inherited his clubs and fraternities as he had inherited his town and country houses and his business connections. He seemed to be one of those enviable young men who, from the time they are born, have everything to make life pleasant. The Consul enumerated a New York house, various country estates, the fact that he was a well-known yachtsman, and that his horses took prizes at the horse shows.

The Consul described him as "a tall, good-looking, swanky chap." So far the course of Hollinger's life runs with extreme regularity.

"In the course of time he married, just the kind of girl you'd expect him to. When the break in his life came, he must have been thirty or over. He had a little boy of six or seven," the Consul said reflectively.

"With that kind of background and that kind of bringing up the whole thing looks different, you know. You can't explain it. What do you think was in his mind when he went down to Mexico? Do you suppose he was sick of his marriage and ready to chuck it? Or do you think it was, as it seems to me, the kind of Paolo and Francesca thing?" he asked.

Anyway, this is what happened. Paul Hollinger, the pattern of the well-born, properly educated young American of his generation, went down to Mexico. There he met Magdalena Gomez. Of course, the stories were that she was beautiful. The little picture that the Consul had of her showed her to be of a dazzling innocence. She was just out of the convent. You could well believe it. Her eyes seemed to have looked on nothing harsher than flowers, to have observed nothing more disturbing than

nuns, two by two, filing in to prayer. Eyes that looked on dreams. Long, quiet hours in convent gardens. Quiet, reflective hours to dream in. She could not have dreamed anything more fantastic than she had lived. The *Arabian Nights* was not included in her school-girl reading, most likely.

Hollinger and Magdalena fell in love at first sight and ran away. They took an English vessel bound for France. In Paris Magdalena got her trousseau, going from one great *couturière* to another. Of course, Mrs. Hollinger got a divorce, and the headlines in the papers might have been expected. There was a long story about Magdalena, though there was nothing in the world to tell about her except that she had just come out of a convent. The Consul had his own romantic explanation.

"They had come from the ends of the world and different civilizations and different cultures, they looked at each other and, as happens once in a century, they leaped over all the barriers. As far as one can know, these two people belonged to each other."

But, as he pointed out, there was nothing to lead up to the climax, neither the elopement nor the Parisian honeymoon. It was the incredible sequel that has remained forever a question mark. At this point in the story Paul Hollinger and Magdalena Gomez, the Roman Catholic Mexican girl, embraced the Mohammedan religion and went to live in Fez for the rest of their lives. What motive lay behind it? Was Hollinger perhaps so jealous that he couldn't bear that anyone else should look upon Magdalena? Was her sense of sin so heavy that she had to leave the world she knew? Was it merely a romantic gesture? Anyway, whatever the reason, there they lived cut off from the world for ten years.

The Moors didn't respect them much. Self-converted Christians do not interest them. Apparently the Moors considered them as crazy as Hollinger's relatives must have thought him. But whatever the reason was, there they lived, playing out their extravagant romance in this extraordinary seclusion.

What happened behind the blank wall of their house in Fez and out in their orange garden no one knows, no one can tell. The only witness was the monkey-faced slave woman. Did they not have their days when the world was flat and brackish and the bitter tide of monotony and disillusion rose higher than their hearts? Did they have their days in their tiled courtyard when they hated each other and when they desired passionately to be back in their other world? Their other world—it was as much another world to them as though they had actually died and looked back at it across the Styx.

Well, they lived there for ten years, the Consul told me, and then they decided to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca.

"And now," the Consul lamented, "Magdalena is dead, and so is Hollinger, while the first Mrs. Hollinger and the third are having a lawsuit."

I was to visit Hollinger's Turkish widow the next day. I stood waiting for the Consul, looking over the *suk*, a shifting pattern in cream and brown, splashed here and there with a brilliant note, orange, green, yellow. Far off I heard a beat of drums and a shrill whine of fifes. The roaring *suk* became still for a moment, and I waited as one might wait for disaster. Then the procession of the Assuaui—the company of Jesus—passed diagonally through the *suk*, cleaving the crowd whose recoil left a lane. Above the procession flew dark and menacing flags, and they were preceded by their terrible music—music that seemed to come from a country whose heart was bathed in darkness, and which left one in eternal distrust of human motives.

The pious company, lashing themselves with blood-dripping thongs, scourging themselves with chains, throwing iron balls in the air only to crack upon pates, dragged, fainting away, by friends—this procession, blood-flecked,

eyes glazed with religious fury, passed by. It was as if they announced the ultimate strangeness of this country, as though this bleeding, tortured, ecstatic procession were cleaving the surface of things down which one could look into the dark heart of mankind with horror.

Suddenly my mind went back to Magdalena and Hollinger with such vividness that it was as though they were beside me on the verandah gazing at the procession of their fellow-Mohammedans. The procession went streaming through the city gates. It fixed the unbridged distance between their culture and ours. The Crescent meant death to the Cross. Their way of thinking and feeling, their way of living meant death to our way of thinking and feeling. We meant death to each other literally. No wonder Moors thought that the Europeans had only one purpose in the "Far Western Land."

In their hearts they believe we have come to supplant their religion with ours. Morocco has stood still under an enchantment since the Moors left Spain. They sing songs of homesickness and longing for their homes in Granada. They believe that the Crusades are still surging to the Holy Sepulchre. In their minds the old wars are still being fought. As the Consul and I left the hotel, I could yet hear the solemn, awful beat of the drums.

"Curious kind of town to-day," he said, "after one of these religious festivals. A strange temper—hard to explain."

We walked through the milling *suk*, a servant ahead of us crying, "*Balak!*" and snubbing from our way donkeys, mules, tribesmen from the hills. We walked past the gardens of the German Embassy which faced the *suk*, through the city gate, and turned up toward the Kasba.

The Consul paused before a house, and his knock echoed down the silent street. The door opened a crack, and we walked into the courtyard, past a man who recognized the Consul and escorted us in. Children appeared. The oldest cried out a melancholy "Oo-lu-lu" and immediately on all the flat, low housetops round about white-veiled women appeared.

"The Romans have come!" the child shrilled. "The Nazarenes are here!"

She sat, Fadma, the third Mrs. Hollinger, while the old negro woman squatted before her, cooing to her as though she were a baby. A pale little girl of fifteen or sixteen, looking far too young to have a baby. She looked like a lost child herself. She had married so strange and alien a thing as a passing American who was still mourning his dead wife. He had not been interested in her. What had she meant to him? Anything? Or had she always been as frightened as she was now, sitting silent, staring at who knows what, while the old woman crooned, "My little bird, my little white bird. Do not be frightened, my child, my flower."

Fear—that was it. She was frightened. She sat as if under an enchantment of fear. Of what? Birth or death or life? Maybe all three. Afraid of loneliness most of all, for it seemed that her painted mouth whispered all day the words, "I want to go home." She could not understand why she could not go back at once to Constantinople.

But she could not travel now. She could not travel until her child was born. So by an ironic fate she was now in Tangier contending with a woman she had never seen for a dead man's money—the American heirs putting out a hand across the Atlantic for it for his son's sake. Fadma, the third Mrs. Hollinger, understood nothing about it. The romantic young Consul was fighting to keep a little money for her.

These things were all I knew about this girl around whom this drama was being played. I knew her name and that she was the sister of a Turkish soldier who somehow or other had learned about the grief of the American whose wife had died on a pilgrimage to

Mecca. The old Moorish woman told me that it was Hollinger's Moorish "boy" who had cooked up the marriage for him. The old slave woman and the Moorish "boy" had both become frightened about Hollinger in Constantinople. He sat, it seemed, all night and day staring at the boxes that contained his wife's clothing. Sometimes he'd have the old woman take dresses out and he'd stare at them. They thought he was going crazy.

And here comes another inexplicable part of the story. In painted wooden Moorish boxes, Magdalena took with her to Mecca the trousseau she had had made by the famous Paris dressmakers ten years before. Apparently these clothes bought in the first days of their romance meant so much to both of them that Hollinger would not be parted from them nor would she. They were carried up by caravan from Fez to Tangier and then taken by devious ways of water and rail to Mecca. It is hard to fathom what lay behind their devotion to these clothes.

It takes a long time to make a pilgrimage from Tangier to Mecca. Usually thousands of people die on the way. It was on the way back that Magdalena died. That was in Constantinople.

"He couldn't live without her, you see," the Consul explained. "They were fused together. They were one creature. He wasn't the kind of man to commit suicide—but he might as well have done it. He was brooding himself to death when they persuaded him to marry the little Turkish girl. He scarcely seemed to be aware that she was alive. He frightened her. It must have been like being married to a shadow. Then he got homesick and wanted to come back to Morocco."

Hollinger was actually going back to Fez and taking with him all of Magdalena's trousseau done up in the wooden boxes in which they traveled all the way to Mecca and back. The contents of these boxes were causing the Consul trouble. They were part, of course, of Fadma's inheritance, these phantasmal clothes. He asked me if I would not come to the Consulate next day and appraise them.

"Of course," he explained, "there isn't any value to clothes of this kind, but just put some price on them. It has to go down on the inventory."

Laid out on the wide tables of the Consulate were the dresses of Magdalena. All her earthly possessions which had been rolled and packed tightly in wooden boxes and had journeyed with her on the fatal pilgrimage to Mecca. One could not wonder that Hollinger would not part with them. Even to us who were strangers these clothes were living witness concerning Magdalena. Her tastes, her habits, her character, her very looks were conjured up before me.

She was slender and small and dark, a very exquisite woman. And this one could tell because these dresses were all on one scale of color, from pale rose to deep wine. Cloth, satin, silk, that ran up and down one scale of color only. There was no note of anything else except white. The dresses were in the mode of some ten years before. To-day they would be museum pieces, these dresses of thirty years ago.

How elaborately made! What trains, what stiffenings in the skirts! How boned and lined and cut the basques! What sleeves! Worth, Poiret, Redfern. There were evening clothes, reception dresses, tailored suits, tea gowns—a sackful for every possible occasion for a lady of fashion—a lady of fashion who bought these dresses to prepare for ten years of life in Fez as a devout Mohammedan woman.

What obscure want of her nature did they fill? Did she wear these clothes? one wondered. Did she put on her dinner dress and sit opposite Paul Hollinger? And when would she wear the deep wine-colored velvet opera wrap? Did she call the old slave woman of an evening to dress her up in her beautiful clothes? And whom did she receive in those elaborate reception dresses?

For what strange people did she pour tea? Or did she pour tea only for memories? And what bland and innocent memories they must have been. For her clothes proclaimed that this slender, dark little girl was innocent as dawn. This was attested by the naïveté of her personal linen.

She stooped to no frivolity. She'd bought not one of those fanciful things that froth in Paris windows. All her undergarments were of a convent pattern. Perhaps she'd made them herself in the convent. And there were quantities of them. Heavy linen unadorned, the linen of a good woman who covers herself thoroughly and to whom the use of frivolous underwear would be an impossibility. Was it longing or homesickness that had made her keep them so preciously, or was it the memory of romance? For they were perfect, all of them. She had taken excellent care of the precious trousseau, so that even now the dresses were almost as fresh as when they had been purchased on that strange honeymoon ten years before.

Of all her life in Mexico, there remained nothing except the convent-made underwear and two fans. No adornment, no shawl, no hint or breath of the other existence before she met Hollinger. There were no Moorish clothes, no *caftan*, no slippers, no sign of Moorish costume of any kind, as though Magdalena had listened to the call to prayer dressed perfectly in the fashions of a decade ago. Perhaps in Fez time stood still.

I left the Consulate feeling that everything but the key of Magdalena's existence had been given me. It seemed incredible that I should have such intimacy with this woman, and yet know nothing else. As I looked at Magdalena's things the old slave woman sat squatting on the floor, and she seemed to sleep, but I was conscious that there was a gleam between her half-closed eyelids, and that she watched me.

Many weeks later I came back from a trip in Spain and sat at night on the roof of Enrique's Hotel. The sky stretched immense and blue above us. The *suk* below stirred and muttered. The air was full of the distant, muffled beating of drums coming from who knows where. A donkey brayed in the *fondak* below, and other donkeys answered, one after another. I settled back, knowing that the enormous ancient East had closed in on me again. The Consul spoke in the darkness:

"You remember the little girl Fadma, Hollinger's widow? Well, his American heirs compromised. She has a nice sum of money. She's gone home. The baby died." I could imagine her, young, bewildered and afraid, at last going home not knowing why she had stayed in Tangier, or where her money had come from. She had been sucked into the heavy whirlpool of Hollinger's life and casually spewed out again.

"Now the old slave woman has no mistress," said the Consul in that tone of mild irritation in which he communicated the inexplicable details of life which pleased him most. "The strange part of it is that she comes here every day and squats outside the door for hours. She comes in the morning and goes away at noon. Later she comes back. The Señorita Juila often gives her food."

"Why do you think she does it?" I asked as I knew he wished me to.

"She is waiting," he said triumphantly. "She is sitting there waiting for someone who she knows will come back some day!"

I saw her sitting outside the hotel door, the patient resignation of the East in every fold of her garment, as though she was ready to wait for days, for weeks, for months, for a lifetime. She watched me go by. Her face, with which she could tell any story, was as impassive as a black image. Only she slid her eyes at me as though each one of the people who went into the hotel was a bead she told off and slipped on some endless string. There was no gleam of recognition on her face. Later, there

was a noise on my door. A bare whisper of fingers over wood. The old slave woman came into the room.

She put her finger to her lips and made one of her strange, comic faces which imposed caution and silence. I motioned to her to sit down. She sat looking at me fixedly as though mutely asking me something. Suddenly I knew that it was for myself that she had been waiting, and that she had been ready to wait for an unmeasured time, believing that I must come back.

At last, looking about her as though she expected some unforeseen person to appear, fearfully and with immense precaution she drew from the folds of her dress a crucifix and a rosary.

"They were my Señorita's," she said very low and in her guttural Spanish. She sat quite quietly while she waited for me to grasp what this implied, to comprehend the immense complication that this crucifix and rosary put in the life of Magdalena, whose lover and husband had shut her off in a Mohammedan world.

The silence grew around us and enveloped us, the old woman watching me profoundly, as though to sense if I had grasped the deep significance of what she had come to tell me. Then as though satisfied with the way I had received her confidence, she slipped down on the floor to her knees. She knelt upright in the attitude of nuns at prayer. I could hear her mutter, the beads slipping between her monkey fingers:

"*Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum.*" She said her Hail Marys at length, looking, in her long Moorish clothes, as though she belonged to some strange African Order.

"You are Christian?" I asked her. She slid her eyes around again, looking for possible eavesdroppers, before her mouth framed the words:

"*Si*, Señora. Through my mistress I became Christian. It was a great comfort to her." She resumed her seat again, and slowly tears welled to her eyes. It was as though she were looking back over long years of secret devotions. At last she spoke again:

"She died in the Faith. It was managed by God's mercy," here she crossed herself, "that my mistress received the Blessed Sacrament."

"Did her husband know this?" I asked. Again her look of intense and frightened secrecy. She shook her head.

"She kept it from him, always, always. She wanted to. It would have made him unhappy. She told me before she died that some day I should find a Christian woman to trust. She thought in case my master died that I should be happier with Spanish nuns where I could say prayers and masses for her soul." Then she framed the words so that I could barely hear them. "I have gold, very much. For masses for her soul!" Then she branched off into a story of impossible intricacy as to how Hollinger had been kept away while the priest had come.

"If the master had found out!" she said, and she rolled her eyes around. Suddenly I saw her life as it had been, dramatic, colorful, full of surprises and alarms, with each prayer a conspiracy. There was a ray of light over the clothes in the Consulate. I glimpsed the awful conflict between religion and love which had been Magdalena's daily bread.

These things the old woman had shed some light upon, but the center of the story, Hollinger, she left in impenetrable darkness. I asked again:

"He, your master, knew nothing, then?" The old woman shook her head vehemently.

"He was a good Mohammedan," she said. "If he had found out—" she rolled her eyes around, and I was left with my eternal question mark of Hollinger. I couldn't leave it at that. I had to get some ray of light projected into the mist which surrounded him. The Consul was the only person who might give such illumination. Again he and I sat late upon the upper roof. The *suk* was spread beneath us, and from it came an eternal murmur as

though of bees. Spurts of light flamed from the small campfires. Distinct, yet ghostly, the square white tower of a mosque looked serenely at heaven.

I knew that the *suk* would sleep and that the drums would finally be stilled. Then deep and sweet, a disembodied voice would cry from that tower, "*Allah il Allah!*" and the call to prayer would float over the sleeping *suk* and instantly awaken it to life and prayer. We were silent a long time after I had finished my story of Magdalena. The Consul spoke at last, diffidently, and looking out into the night's magnificence.

"You know," he said, "my answer for Hollinger is that somehow he became a part of this," and he made a comprehensive gesture. It included the minaret, the *suk*, the ceaseless vibration of the drums and the quiet, white town piled on the hillside beyond the walls.

"That can happen," he argued. "Once in a generation a man enters another culture. He goes then through a transformation. He changes his spiritual race. It is a frightful and difficult thing to do, but it has been done. In a generation there are a few isolated people who go through this species of death—of translation. All of us who stay here are forever looking over the wall of race—trying and trying to learn the secret of the East. We never penetrate it. It eludes us—always. Take me. I've lived here for three years. I've immersed myself in this life and in speculation about it. I'm always trying to find the answer to even a word of its eternal riddle. I know the beauty, pride, and completeness of the East. I know its infinite subtleties and ambiguities. I have seen its cruelties. And always I have the sense of witnessing something which happened a long time ago. Always I feel that I am only catching glimpses of it through a half-open door.

"Did Hollinger walk through the door and find out what was going on on the other side? Did he find out the riddle at which I am always guessing? If he found it out he must have become one of them to do it. When he came here with Magdalena he did not wait more than a year before he joined the faith—joined it actually. How else could anyone become possessed of the answer to the riddle—what other possible explanation is there for Hollinger?" he asked me. "It must be the explanation. Now I know about Magdalena's religion I am sure it is."

But the anxiety of uncertainty was in his voice. Again we were silent, Hollinger a shadowy question mark between us—a riddle deep as the East concerning which we might forever speculate but forever speculate in vain.

THE AMERICAN TOURIST MAKES HISTORY

BY HIRAM MOTHERWELL

IT was, unquestionably, Mark Twain's *Innocents Abroad* which inaugurated the historic phenomenon known as the "American tourist traffic." That book revealed to thousands of Americans the opportunity which Europe offered them to pose as superior to the effete Old World. How many small-town lawyers and commission men longed to gaze superciliously at a mummy and inquire of the guide, "Is—ah—is he —dead?" Tradition has it that the entire guild of ciceroni, especially in Italy, was prepared for years after the publication of that book to meet the dreaded question with a dagger thrust.

In the early 'seventies, when *Innocents Abroad* was at the full peak of its efficiency as a stimulus to foreign travel, American tourists to Europe, according to the computations of Messrs. Williams, Bullock, and Tucker, were annually spending some thirty million dollars. This sum must have accounted for 30,000 tourists, or fewer, for in those days the Grand Tour was really grand, and a thousand dollars was but a moderate expenditure for the vacation of a lifetime. But nearly sixty years later, in 1928, it was not 30,000, but 437,111 persons who (according to the records of the United States Department of Commerce) left these shores by ship for foreign parts. In addition there were 14,861 who went to Canada and Mexico by rail, besides the unnumbered occupants of 3,645,455 motor cars who entered Canada for a day or more. In all, these tourists (so the Government statisticians aver) spent $818,606,000 abroad in the year 1928, of which sum $650,000,000 was spent outside the North American hemisphere.

This is really an astonishing state of affairs—the more so because the American tourist traffic has steadily increased in respect to numbers and expenditures since the War and shows to-day not the slightest sign of abating. The American tourist has become a dominant factor in the modern world. In detail he may be, as he is usually depicted, a comic figure, rich game for such a satirist as Miss Ruth Draper. He may (in detail) boast of having seen the entire Louvre in two hours and view the Colosseum with the remark, "Hell, we've got a bigger stadium than that in Chicago." But taken in the mass, these tourists do not make comedy; they make history. Judged merely by the annual sums of money transferred abroad, they are more important than all the famous American foreign investments taken together and four times as important as the war debts. And as a factor in international relations, both economic and cultural, they constitute nothing less than a major element in the growth of modern civilization.

II

There was a time, not many years ago, when many persons (prompted by the American railway and hotel associations, and stimulated by the "See America First" propaganda) honestly believed that foreign travel constituted a total loss to America. Foreign tourists, they argued, were taking out of the country millions of dollars of American money which might be spent here. But the

United States Department of Commerce, the most alert of watchdogs for American prosperity, did not take that view of the matter at all. In its calculations the American tourist traffic was not a "loss," but a positive salvation to the country.

For it solved the problem which chiefly worried the Department of Commerce: How shall the United States continue to receive the interest on her foreign investments without receiving goods to compete with American products? It was obvious that Americans wanted to be paid the interest on the money they had lent (some fifteen billion dollars); yet it was equally obvious that America did not want to lower its tariff to admit foreign goods. Well, then, how did America want to be paid?

It was the American tourist who gave the answer. America wanted, not Europe's motor cars, or perfumery, or cotton shirts, but Europe's scenery, vintage wines, and old masters. To secure such payment, Americans would go to Europe to fetch it. An American who had invested $1,000 in the *Allgemeine Elektrizitäts Gesellschaft* could not, because of the tariff, receive payment in the form of a radio set manufactured by the said *Gesellschaft*, but he could go to Germany and take out his claim in the form of many bottles of good Moselle wine which the *Gesellschaft*, by the mysterious operations of finance, would pay for. He would "import" the money through his eyes and his mouth, and carry it back to America with him transmuted into pleasant memories of strange lands.

In the telling, this function of the American tourist may sound like romantic metaphor. But in the practice it is of crucial importance to the American balance of international payments.* In 1928 the United States received satisfaction of interest payments from money loaned abroad to the amount of seven hundred and thirty-three million dollars. Did she receive this sum in the form of goods? Certainly not. On the contrary, she shipped abroad goods to the amount of eight hundred million dollars which were not paid for in current trade. Far from diminishing the debit of the outside world toward America, this export surplus increased it. For how did Americans receive payment for this eight hundred million dollars of excess exports? They didn't. They simply gave these goods to foreign countries on credit, increasing by so much their foreign investments. The credits derived from America's export surplus are, in the final reckoning, simply reinvested abroad, increasing by so much the debt of the outside world toward us and, by a relative amount, the annual interest due us. Far from liquidating the foreign obligations, the merchandise operations only increase them. And this is simply another way of saying that America's "favorable balance of trade" is financed by American foreign loans. America's excess of exports over imports is specifically made possible by the credits annually extended.

It is, to repeat, not through merchandise transactions that America receives interest payments on its foreign loans, both governmental and private, but through the tourist traffic. If there were no American tourists going abroad each year, the American nation would be obliged to receive interest payments in the form of foreign goods, shipped here to compete with American products. If, by some presidential fiat, all Americans were to-morrow forbidden to sail from American ports, the American tariff would have to be lowered within six months.

On the other hand, so long as the tourist traffic continues to expand, the American government is free to adhere to its policy of maintaining a high tariff and forcing the maximum of export

* It should be pointed out that the proper interpretation of the American balance of international payments is a controversial subject. For the sake of simplicity in this essay I have been obliged to be somewhat arbitrary in my presentation of the data, particularly in balancing off one set of items against another and in quoting gross sums without regard to modifications and offsets. But while there are various ways of presenting these figures, they all come to the same thing in the end—that if it were not for the item of tourist expenditures America's economic relations with the outside world would be profoundly disturbed.

trade indefinitely. This policy, so precious to a nation whose national machinery is geared to super-production, has repeatedly been declared by economists to be inherently illogical and impossible to maintain over a period of years. For, they say, payments to the United States from abroad can be made, in the long run, only by means of goods shipped here in excess of goods which she exports—in other words, by means of an "unfavorable" trade balance based on a low tariff. The logic of the economists is unexceptionable except for the fact that they forget one item—the great American tourist. It is he, and he alone, who has enabled the Department of Commerce to say, "It is impossible to predict with any assurance that the United States will ever have an unfavorable balance of trade."

For however great the foreign debt to America may become in the decades ahead of us (and it is increasing by more than half a billion dollars each year), however huge the annual sums of interest due, it is always possible for the American tourist to settle accounts. Other items in the American international balance are rather rigidly controlled—imports by the tariff, the export surplus by foreign loans. But the tourist traffic is free to soar as high as it likes. After all, why should American tourists number only half a million? Why not a million? Why not two million? Why should not trips to Europe become as common, and as widely distributed among social classes, as the ownership of motor cars? It is possible to take a very pleasant "Ford" trip to Europe for as little as four or five hundred dollars. European travel is no longer, as it was in Mark Twain's day, a luxury requiring the outlay of thousands. Like other products of our machine civilization, it has found its way down to the middle strata, and not only the white-collar clerk, but also the skilled mechanic can see the Uffizi if he wants to. Foreign travel, as it becomes increasingly popular, is becoming increasingly democratized. It is surprising to learn from government reports that American tourists departing by steamship divide themselves almost equally among the four classes. Surprising, that is, not that the first-class passengers equal those of tourist third (for in the old days it was a disgrace to sail in other than first class), but that those of tourist third equal those of first. Since the War the stigma has been entirely removed from second, third, and steerage. The "tourist industry," like the motor car and motion picture industries, has become a billion-dollar affair because it has begun to place its wares within reach of the masses. And it has been able to reach the masses because, as I have suggested, it responds to a genuine national need. It is, indeed, rather closely correlated to this need. One of the safest of predictions in that nebulous science which is called economics is that the American tourist traffic must steadily increase in order to take care of the ever-mounting interest charges due to the United States.

Of course the tourist is all unconscious that he is fulfilling any such lofty economic function. In his mind the only compulsion to travel is his desire for edification or recreation, plus a reassuring knowledge that he has some spare money in the bank. Yet he is, all unwittingly, following the line of economic least resistance. He is responding to a pull exerted by the advertisements of steamship companies, by the propaganda of foreign tourist bureaus, by the legend of European "personal liberty." If, on the contrary, his desire were to stay at home and buy imported Paris perfumery or English woolen suits, he would be discouraged by the high tariff; there is a substantial economic obstacle to his receiving here satisfaction of the sum Europe owes him. But there is no economic obstacle placed in the way of foreign travel. In consequence he is free to spend money in Europe to just about the amount which Europe annually makes available to him

in interest charges—in other words, to just about the amount needed to fill America's economic vacuum. He is a helpless but happy puppet of the great forces of international trade and finance.

Yet the American "tourist traffic," in its broader sense, is not confined to the "tripper" who takes a month's vacation on the Riviera or devotes six weeks to studying the old masters. There are, according to Government figures, no fewer than 392,668 Americans permanently residing abroad. True, 235,000 of them are in neighboring Canada. But the figure of 70,000 in Europe is impressive enough. Picture 25,000 in France alone, half of them in Paris and thousands invading the tiny hilltop villages of the Maritime Alps. The Paris colony, if we include those persons settling down for a protracted visit, constitutes a "little America" comprising 25,000 souls (if Americans have souls, which many Frenchmen doubt).

Not less important is the returned immigrant—the peasant who helped build a subway or who set up a fruit shop and, by dint of saving, has become in the eyes of his neighbors back home a millionaire. His return is a historic event in the village. The certificate of deposit which represents his savings is a document resplendent above all in the local archives. He has become *Signore* or *Herrschaft* by virtue of his contact with that magical land, America. Where two or three of him are gathered together, there is the local aristocracy. And he too has wrought mightily to right the balance of American trade.

III

What, then, is the ulterior significance of this gigantic American invasion of the world, this experiment in the mass consumption of culture? Is it anything beyond half a million pleasant vacations and a rectification of the American trade balance?

It is common enough to laugh at the "culture" which the American tourist acquires. Tourist stories can be depended on to entertain at dinner parties of the American colony. Parisian girl shows, a call on Mussolini, or a smattering of names of painters—such, it would seem, are the finest fruits of European travel in the tourist's eyes.

True enough. I myself have for eight years watched tourists come and go through the capitals of Europe, and have been duly appalled by their terrific tempo, their superficial relish of strange sights, their placid assumption that foreigners are to be classed somewhere among the lower animals. But these are usually tourists who have come for the first time, or at least for the first time since the War. The "repeater" (and the majority of American tourists become repeaters) gets an entirely different set of impressions. A man cannot be exposed repeatedly to an alien atmosphere without experiencing a subtle alteration in his mental chemistry.

The repeater tourist may return home with the same old conviction that America is the greatest country in the world (to which I, too, would subscribe), but at least he will know better the reasons why. In a brief motor trip he may have crossed half a dozen customs boundaries; he will recall that he could motor for two weeks in America without ever thinking of customs. He may be arrested in Italy (as a result of a quarrel with a guide) for "having spoken disrespectfully of the Duce"; he will discover that once arrested he has lost all civil rights, including the rights of counsel and of facing his accusers, and the presumption of innocence. He will then begin to appreciate the difference between Roman law and English law and the significance of habeas corpus. In short he will begin to *understand* his own country, instead of taking it for granted.

But he will also, though as through a glass darkly, begin to understand other peoples. He will learn with a shock that Italians regard Americans as children.

He will begin to analyze the indictment (the same which he himself had brought against the Italians) and question the eternal rightness of the American prejudices. He will discover that the spontaneous amiability of many European servants is only traditional politeness inherited down the centuries, and will speculate on the part which manners play in civilization. He will take violent sides with France against Germany, or with Germany against France, and will come upon the surprising fact, as yet generally unrevealed to Americans, that there are two sides to every quarrel. He will find that Europeans are unconcerned as to the identity and civil condition of the person with whom one establishes domicile, and will begin to inquire of himself what is the true basis of morals.

He will not, necessarily, adopt the European point of view—that is characteristic of the puppy stage of the tourist's growth—but he begins to divine that the world is complex and that the truth must be wrestled with. To learn that a certain tip to a European servant may be not a charity but a traditional right; or that a *mafista* murderer may be, according to his own ancient code of honor, not a criminal at all, is to learn that values exist in the world which are not dreamt of in the American philosophy. The moment Americans become inquiring rather than assertive America will be able to prepare itself for its destiny as a world power. The consciousness of ignorance is the beginning of wisdom.

IV

That such experiences will produce any immediate change in American civilization, I do not suppose. The ideas which one acquires in childhood and adolescence are precious and are rarely renounced. But history is long, and a new generation is growing up which is even too ready to cleave to the ideas which are the exact contrary of those cherished by its parents. The leaven of European travel is bound to work. America has changed much in one generation and is bound to change more. The important fact about the change now imperceptibly taking place as a result of wholesale foreign travel is that it is in the direction of international understanding.

For the accepted ideas which Americans hold as to foreign countries do, in the long run, influence American foreign policy. It is true that "public opinion" has little control over the day-to-day operations of diplomacy. The foreign office is traditionally the aristocrat of the government services; its wisdom is superior to the prejudices of the common man, and it does its work "realistically" in conformity with the professional technic which it cherishes. Yet even the American State Department is limited and bound in its action by the prejudices of the public. The American government, under pressure from banking and big industrial interests, might possibly have been willing to cancel all the war debts and leave a clean slate for American foreign trade. But the widespread conviction that Europe was merely seeking to escape its just obligations like a dishonest debtor fixed definite limits to the Department's freedom of action in this respect. Again, the American government might be only too glad to adopt a liberal interpretation of Anglo-American naval parity, giving due consideration to the fact that American interests are for the most part geographically concentrated, whereas those of Great Britain are scattered over the entire globe. But the popular assumption that naval equality is purely mathematical obliges the American government to insist on a "yardstick" which means nothing in terms of real warfare, while it distracts attention from the real need of Anglo-American agreement concerning the manner in which the major affairs of the world should be administered.

Now if half a million, or a million, or two million Americans are annually exposed to Europe and European ideas, I believe that these negative prejudices

will be slowly dissolved and American policy freed to deal flexibly and acutely with each foreign problem as it arises. Indeed, some such change must come over public opinion if the United States is ever to be at liberty to play its new part in the new world. Already this nation has begun to exercise an imperial (although veiled) dominion over large portions of the earth, while Americans generally are still, in their mode of thinking, isolationists and small traders. It is no longer true that America can go its own way without regard to Europe and Asia. And it is no longer true that Americans can be unaware of Europe and Asia when they think about politics. There can, to my mind, be no doubt that the observation of foreign countries by millions of Americans is gradually creating here the international (or what the British might call the imperial) mentality.

The part which may be played in this work by American students abroad is difficult to estimate. For although thousands are "taking courses" in the *belles lettres* at the Sorbonne, the serious post-graduate workers, especially in the German universities, have fallen off in numbers since the War. This is the greatest of pities. I have always believed that the ability which enabled J. P. Morgan the elder to become America's foremost international banker was in large measure nurtured by the familiarity with Continental ideas and methods which he gained at Göttingen. And I know well what a German training did for one distinguished American, and through him for the entire world. It was Alanson B. Houghton's understanding of Germany and Germans, acquired during his post-graduate study there, that enabled him, as American ambassador to Berlin, to grasp the realities of the Reich's situation at a time when his analysis was regarded, officially and popularly, as heresy. But he finally prevailed. His recommendations to the State Department were largely instrumental in making possible the Dawes Plan, which completely reversed the established method of dealing with Germany and literally rescued Europe from chaos. How many young Morgans and Houghtons may at this moment be studying in Europe no one can divine. But if there are any of unusual ability, some of them will surely find themselves one day in positions where their knowledge of other lands and other minds, gained in the formative years of their development, will enable them to exercise a crucial influence on world affairs.

V

The Romans who went to Greece two centuries before the birth of Christ to fight for the rights of small nations against the militaristic autocracy of Macedon brought home with them no acts of annexation and no indemnities. But they brought souvenirs—statues, paintings, manuscripts—which astonished all Rome. Soon it became fashionable among well-to-do Roman families to send their sons to make the Grand Tour of Greece. Roman generals and pro-consuls dispatched ever larger shiploads of Greek works of art to adorn the interior of Alban villas, and—still more important—thousands of teacher-slaves and artist-slaves to instruct the barbarians of the west in the ways of civilization. And what did Rome produce as a result of this magnificent schooling? Pathetically little. Accomplished writers not a few, but most of them skilled imitators or adapters of Greek classics; and only one, Virgil, who deeply influenced succeeding generations. In sculpture and painting nothing save in the field of realistic portraiture. In architecture, outside the utilitarian categories and an occasional resplendent dome, nothing save a debased standardization of Greek forms. And in the nurture of personality, that finest flower of civilization, what good did Greek culture do Rome? None. A few aristocrats were distinguished for their attainments. But the general level of political and

social culture rapidly sank. The Roman magistrate and civil servant, so highly praised by Polybius, grew corrupt; the responsible administrator became a jobber and grafter, and the man of leisure became a *débauché* and weakling. Rome sought on a gigantic scale to import culture, and succeeded in importing nothing but interior decoration.

It is impossible to resist the temptation to draw a parallel between imperial Rome and imperial America. America, efficient, practical, unimaginative like republican Rome, is gutting Europe of its artists, its objects of beauty, its very villas and palaces. With its armies of tourists it is seeking to acquire the entire culture of the older parent civilizations to the east. Will Americans, like the Romans, buy everything and learn nothing? Will they grasp at the flower of civilization only to see it wither in their hands?

The answer can be given only by the American tourist. If he learns from his visits to Europe that all men are different, that human individuality is precious, that life is an art, he will, because he is multiplied a million-fold every year, slowly transform America into the most civilized nation the world has ever seen. He has his opportunity to contribute his answer to the question which is plaguing millions of Americans: how shall we use our money and our leisure?

It is absurd to suppose that any law of analogy has predestined America to go the way of Rome. An analogy may indicate a danger; it cannot dictate a future. The destiny of America is not in the hands of "historic law"; it is in the hands of Americans.

And the Roman analogy is itself tenuous. The differences between the two civilizations are far more striking than their similarities. And the decisive difference, I believe, is this: the Roman tourist went abroad with the mentality of a slave-master; the American tourist, with all his pathetic self-assertiveness, takes with him on the Grand Tour an instinctive reverence for the dignity of productive labor.

MANNERS

AMERICAN AND ENGLISH

BY MARY BORDEN

WHAT are good manners? Do they make the man or do they, as some who admire rough diamonds think, only make him less of a man? Sometimes one is half persuaded by the old people who remember wearing furbelows, feather boas, and bustles that manners have sadly deteriorated since their day; but I fancy that they have merely changed, and that the pattern of good manners is a simpler thing than it used to be, just as our frocks are simpler, and for the same reason.

There is a close connection between manners and clothes. You can't curtsy in a tight skirt. But the connection is not only with frocks. Manners must adapt themselves to the paraphernalia and tempo of life. There is no time nowadays for elaborate bows and the sweeping flourishes of top hats. If an admiring male tried on Fifth Avenue or Piccadilly the sort of greeting suitable to ladies in sedan chairs or in open carriages, he'd be run over or run in for holding up the traffic. The most he can do is wave a hand toward the hand that is waved to him. Hurry and noise fix the style of our behavior. Good style, good form, good manners, these are not good unless they fit their surroundings. And so the elaborate decorative standards of the leisured nineteenth century have been replaced by a simplicity, a severity, and a brevity befitting a hurried world of dust and crowds and snorting machines. Motors and aeroplanes, undergrounds, elevators, and telephones have designed our clothes for us and our manners. And whether we like the new style or the old is of no consequence. We are helpless. We are not consulted. The great machine rushes on, whirling us up and down, sucking us in and blowing us out of the funnel of life, like some enormous vacuum cleaner; and the problem of decent, becoming, agreeable behavior becomes a problem more serious than that of the curve of a bow or the pattern of a greeting. Indeed, the question presents itself, will good manners survive at all in this frenzied modern world? Is it possible to remain serene in the hustle and lend to life by one's gestures, words, and expression of countenance something of the charm that depends upon gentleness?

Again, another question, and the young world of to-day seems to be asking it: do manners really matter any more? Is courtesy important? Elegance of demeanor, charm of gesture, grace of phrase, aren't these worn out hypocrisies, unsuitable and worthless relics of an elaborate insincerity that we are glad to be rid of? And the answer of youth seems to be, "No more nonsense of that sort. No more humbug." And the young women say, "We don't want chivalry; we want equality." And the young men say, "We've no time and no use for fine clothes, fine manners, fine phrases. If you want to be treated as men, so much the better. It'll save us time." And as most of what they say to one another is said on the telephone or to the accompaniment of a jazz band, what they do say and the way they

say it do not really seem to matter at all.

They understand one another, and that, presumably, is the main thing. They've evolved a sort of shorthand conversation, a telegraphic social style; a technic that, compared with the soft subtleties of the French salon and the French boudoir, resembles the rattling of typewriters and the syncopated beat of drums and cymbals. Young America laughs with derision at the foppish elegance of nineteenth-century France. Young America condemns affectation. It is in search of reality. It exalts sincerity, truth, naturalness. It is enamored of life, real life, life in the raw, life lived at the highest pitch of excitement. It is vigorous, greedy, gallant, ruthless, and militant. And in its pursuit of these things, inevitably, good manners are not considered as of very much value. The tendency is not to bother about them. And this is true of English youth too, to a certain extent. The young people of to-day are all social Bolsheviks of various shades of red. It is not a bad thing. I am one of the middle-aged who suspect that the young people of to-day are more interesting than we were at their age.

But all this deals merely with a superficial aspect of our topic, with what one may call the mannerisms of our period. The question of what constitutes good manners in the truest sense goes deeper. In the last analysis, the good or bad manners of a nation depend upon character, and are an evidence of the most secret hidden springs in that character.

I take it that the essence of good manners is the gift of putting people at their ease, not the chosen few people whom one likes, but all people. Yes, ease is the word that describes good manners. The great lady is at her ease with the gardener, the housemaid, the ragamuffin, the outcast, and she makes them all feel comfortable in her presence. And bad manners is the faculty of making everyone uncomfortable, whether by being abruptly rude, or overwhelmingly gushing, too cordial or too lacking in cordiality, too contemptuous or too flattering. Too much of anything is bad manners. It destroys ease and makes people fidget. A manner that makes other people nervous is a bad manner, whether it be frankly unpleasant or too pleasant by far.

It is very dangerous to generalize, and in comparing the manners of English and Americans, I know that I am heading straight for trouble. Nevertheless, I believe that a certain kind of comparison is possible and is interesting. Quickly then, at once, to throw off without allowing oneself time to hesitate, a few of these dangerous generalizations. Americans have on the whole too much manner when they have good manners, and the English have too little. The courtesy of an American is apt to be excessive. He overdoes it when he wants to be nice. The Englishman very often so underdoes it that one doesn't know he is trying to be nice at all. It took me ten years to find this out, and I am only now beginning to appreciate the good intentions of some of my taciturn, awkward, glowering English acquaintances. But now that I've grown accustomed to their sort of understatement and am used to the mild mutterings of such friendliness, I find myself bewildered by the voluble cordiality of my own compatriots. They sometimes, I confess, make me feel quite jumpy, and sometimes I quite unfairly suspect their honesty.

In America it is the young ones that are rude, and the old people who are polite. In England it is the other way round. Young people and children are still severely sat on in England. They are brought up to show a decent indiscriminating respect for their elders. A man doesn't really begin to indulge his taste for being disagreeable until after he is thirty. Or, if one divides a nation in a different way, in France it is the common people and the middle classes who have the best manners; it is the great aristocrats who are insolent. In England the middle class has no special title to good manners because it lacks polish and

imagination and is essentially less artistic than the French bourgeoisie. Indeed, I think the French middle class the most cultivated, the best read, the most critical of almost any class of people in the world. America has not yet evolved fixed types or classes. Perhaps it never will, so that such a division has no point. Nor would it be to the point to talk of the American farmer as one of nature's gentlemen. When I say that the common people of France have the best manners, I don't mean in the least that they are nature's gentlemen; I mean that they have the exquisite polished manners of men of the world, and a way of expressing themselves that would put many an English squire or Wall Street magnate to shame.

In England people care less about good manners than good form. The two are not at all synonymous. Good form may, and often does, allow one to be very rude. Good form is a question of style, of the way one does the ordinary things of life, like dressing, eating, and walking. It involves taste and a rigid standard of taste. It is the stupid man's refuge, a kind of class egotism. Its temple is the smart club whose shining lights may be the most disagreeable, crotchety old bores on the face of the earth. The English people are in general too insensitive and too lacking in curiosity to have really good manners; for the lack of curiosity means lack of sympathy and a wide indifference to what others feel or think. Being very modest people or, what is the same thing, excessively proud but not vain, and with an intense positive dislike for showing off, their manners on the whole are better than one might expect; for, though they don't care a rap about pleasing, they don't care either about showing their displeasure, and so probably they show little or no sign of any kind. Indifference is their prime social quality; that it does not make for the gaiety of nations goes without saying. But everyone knows that the English are dull dogs among strangers. What all of us don't realize is that their dullness is not blank stupidity, but is probably a decent veil drawn over an insufferable boredom or an intense contempt. Among themselves, the members of an English set are of course charming. Once they are your friends, no friends wear so well; but we are talking of manners, and I take it that the supreme test of good manners is your way of behavior in the presence of people whom you do not know well and do not love dearly. And—well—let us be frank, on such a test, the Englishman can be the rudest man in the world.

Why is he rude? What does his rudeness spring from? Shyness? Sometimes. But not always by any means. Very often it is the opposite of shyness, an intolerable sense of superiority. Sometimes a sudden instinct for cruelty does it. He wants savagely to see the other fellow wince. Often it is sheer callous indifference. I repeat again, the Englishman doesn't care what strangers think of him. He assumes that he is better than they are, and in any case he knows that he is self-sufficing. His blank classic stare means that he wouldn't care a rap if the whole of Europe and the Americas sank under the sea, so long as the British Isles and, incidentally, the British Dominions, survived the cataclysm.

England is a land that has produced amazing contrasts and types of extraordinary interest. The manner of the great English lady, if she is gifted with human kindliness, is the perfection of gentleness and ease, of measured friendliness and suitability. She has been trained in a very thorough school. She knows how to handle crowds and individuals, how to receive royalty and beggars. She is equally at home in Buckingham Palace or a collier's cottage, and everywhere, being totally unself-conscious, she acts rightly, without effort, and makes everyone comfortable. There is no fuss where she is and no flurry. She is quiet, she makes few gestures, she doesn't talk much. She is

neither languid nor aggressive. She appears to be quite unaffected. Why, one wonders, is she so natural and so easy? How is it that she is able to adapt herself to so many people without apparent effort? The secret lies, I believe, very deep. Beneath her admirable training is a motive and a motive force that carry her unruffled and serene through a mass of social duties which would crush any other woman in the world. The truth is that she is behaving well from no desire to please, but from a sense of responsibility. She doesn't expect to get anything out of it all, and she doesn't expect appreciation. She is discharging a duty and doing her job, just as the cook, the head gardener, and the cowman are doing theirs, and she preserves through it all an admirable detachment. I mean by her sense of responsibility something very definite. The well-bred Englishwoman feels under a perfectly definite obligation to her village, with its villagers, her tenants, her servants and, if her position is a great one, to half the county with its hospitals and its schools, its political organizations, its girl guides, its boy scouts, its farmers, colliers, tradesmen, milkmen, parsons, bishops, publicans, and village idiots. All these are her intimates, and have in her eyes a claim on her; and in moving among them on easy terms of a very special intimate friendliness she knows that she is merely doing her duty, and so she doesn't lay herself out to charm, dazzle, or impose on anyone. She remains perfectly natural and, quite naturally, has the right sure touch with them all.

But take her out of her county and out of her set, put her down in a railway carriage, or a hotel, or a house in Palm Beach, behold her among people who have no claim on her, should they presume to lay any claim, presto! she may quite suddenly become, our great lady, a very rude woman indeed. For, remember, she doesn't care about people who are not in her own world, and her vanity, if she has vanity, is not of the kind that can be flattered by the attentions of strangers. The main difference between her and her American sister is that she has no worlds to conquer. Her world is her own, and she is satisfied to rule it; and her instinct with a newcomer is always to draw back where an American will lean forward.

The American woman wants to please. She is naturally sociable. She craves stimulus, amusement, admiration, and distraction. She would find the life of our great English lady very dull, with its lonely winter evenings in the country. It would surprise her to learn how many evenings the Englishwoman spends alone, and how many days in the society of her tenants and villagers. She doesn't understand the contentment of such a woman, or suspect the truth that what the Englishwoman enjoys most is a solitary walk through the beechwoods with her dogs. The American woman, city bred, member of a society that is constantly in a state of flux, is restless, insecure and, if she is alone, ill at ease. It seems so very unnatural to be alone in such crowds. If she is left alone for an evening she feels something is wrong. And so she surrounds herself with people. Her life is an affair of gathering in and sifting out people. Popularity, that is her fetish. But to be popular, one must lay oneself out to please—and sometimes the effort shows.

It is this sense of effort, of a straining for effect, of exaggerated cordiality that strikes the Englishwoman as so strange in the American. Very probably the Englishwoman discounts unfairly the genuine good will and friendliness underneath. She doesn't understand anyone who really feels like making friends with everybody. She can't believe that the American woman is rushing about like this because she enjoys it. She merely thinks that she is an incomprehensible idiot so to waste her time. It doesn't occur to her when she goes from London to New York that all these hospitable people are genuinely worried about her having a good or bad time. Sympathy? Pity for a lonely stranger? A

charitable impulse to be kind to the passer-by? None of these things occurs to our Englishwoman or her husband when they visit America. They are amazed by the hospitality. And not understanding it, they don't of course appreciate it. The English can't understand American manners because they are themselves neither generous, extravagant, warm-hearted, nor impulsive. They are cool, cautious, reluctant people, shy and reserved, intolerant and incurious; and so American generosity and kindliness strike them very often as very odd indeed.

It is their loss. If any harm is done by such ebullitions of Yankee spirits, the harm is not to the slapdash, innocent, generous, kind-hearted souls who spend themselves being unnecessarily agreeable to the stranger within their gates.

I suppose the truth is that Americans are really more kindly and more sensitive and more vulnerable than English people, with the result that their manners are more unreliable. Social life in America is not smooth. It is jerky, turbulent, changeable. The social climate is an April climate. Clouds rush up, storms break, the skies clear again, all in the course of an evening party. As I have said elsewhere, one is reminded of children. Observe a children's party. The youngsters to begin with are on their best behavior, but presently they grow excited, boisterous, rows begin, tears are shed, and so on. Self-control, an iron self-discipline, an invincible quiet under provocation are not striking characteristics of the American. If he is annoyed he loses his temper. If he is amused he shouts with laughter. If she is jealous she shows it. Indeed, Americans almost always show their feelings too much for perfect manners. Good manners demand that one should ignore one's personal feelings and, if they are disagreeable, that one should hide them.

But this involves us in just what the American despises, hypocrisy. And so we find ourselves back again where we started. America does not, I believe, set very much store by good manners. It suspects its own society leaders. It loathes snobbery and affectation. It becomes impatient, dressed up in its best clothes. It rebels against the multiple conventions of social life. Especially masculine America. Masculine America protests against the elaborate social technic of its women. It digs its toes in and talks through clenched teeth. It goes out of its way to be outspoken. Quite recently it has started a crusade against the foreigner and foreign ways. Nevertheless, were I a waif, a castaway, a stranger, I would rather knock on the door of a hundred per cent American than on any other door in the world, for I know that having no claim on him would be my greatest claim; having no letter of introduction my surest introduction; having no gift to give, my most certain assurance of a kind reception.

What it all comes to is that the American is a kinder and more sociably disposed being than an Englishman, and that he would seldom tread on anyone's toes deliberately. If you care more for genuine friendliness than you do for easy and accomplished technic, plump for the American, but if you prefer the artistry of social intercourse, don't; for the Englishman is a more finished artist in social matters; and the Frenchman, in spite of what our young Americans may say, is the most perfect artist of all. Like the Englishman he has been trained in a very careful school, but he adds to his knowledge as to how things should be done, a real delight in doing them. The Englishman or Englishwoman knows very well how to be agreeable, and for the most part doesn't bother to be so. The American wants to be, but very often doesn't quite know how it is done. The Frenchman both knows how to do it and delights in doing the graceful, pleasant thing. Perfect manners in the last analysis require a sociable heart, a quick, intuitive flair, and a knowledge of the ways of the world. The Englishman has the last, the American the first two, and the Frenchman all three.

THE FUTURE OF THE GREAT CITY

BY STUART CHASE

A DISTINGUISHED savant has perfected a mechanical contrivance which measures the intensity of noise. To my knowledge nobody has yet invented a device to register quantitatively likes and dislikes. During most of one's conscious hours spent in a great city—or anywhere else for that matter—one is so intent upon his job, his food, his sweetheart, or his transit connections that no reactions, in the sense of liking or disliking the impending environment, are registered at all. Here it is, world without end; nothing can be done about it; why bother to appraise it?

Suppose, however, we begin this inquiry into the future of the great city by halting for a moment the remorseless pursuit of the next sixty minutes, and deliberately allowing both the pleasurable and painful sensations of city living to filter through to consciousness.

Fifteen years ago I enjoyed residing in Boston—pleasure slightly outweighed pain. Ten years ago I enjoyed living in Washington, with a higher pleasure margin. In the interim I took up residence in Chicago and suffered a large debit balance. This was not due to human intercourse but only to the physical impact of the town. The people of Chicago are the pleasantest I have ever met. For the past decade I have lived in New York, with an adverse reaction only less than that experienced in the headquarters of the racketeers.

Coming into Manhattan, I begin to feel a strange uneasiness like a slight attack of seasickness; leaving it, I suddenly grow more cheerful. Why? I am no confirmed bucolic; no city-hater in cheese-cloth and sandals. The thoughts which men generate in cities are as important to me as bread. For the past few weeks I have been noting specific impressions in an attempt to come to closer terms with this mysterious total feeling. The record is voluminous, running to hundreds of cases. Here is space for only a few of the more typical, together with certain generalizations into which many of the cases fall. You realize, of course, that we are here dealing more with the testimony of the five senses than with economics, or philosophy, or divination. You realize, too, that lacking a machine like that of Dr. Free, the intensity of the reaction cannot be given, only the bare fact.

Positive Reactions—pleasurable

The city from the East River at sunset
Brooklyn Bridge
Cube masses against blue sky
Corrugated ridges of step-backs—say at 34th Street
Fifth Avenue below 14th Street—where fine old houses and a ghost of dignity remain
The interior of the Graybar Building—many of the newer building interiors
Inside block gardens—say Mark Van Doren's
The view of the city from a high roof garden, particularly at night; towers indirectly illuminated
Bars of sunlight under the elevated railroad
The interior of the Grand Central Station
The Bronx River Parkway
Girls on Fifth Avenue above 42nd Street (one out of six is lovely)
Building excavations with a nuzzling steam shovel
The inside of power houses

Morningside Heights and Riverside Drive, looking across to the Palisades
The American Wing in the Metropolitan Museum
The new Hudson River Bridge
Here and there a shop window with extraordinary modern decorations
The oaths of taxicab drivers
A Stadium concert on a summer night

Negative Reactions—painful
Jammed traffic
Fire-engine sirens, motor-car horns, the cacophony of riveting, loud speakers, steamboat whistles (at night), most people's voices, the rasp of elevator doors, the roar of traffic in general, and that of the elevated in particular
All trucks (probably because I saw a woman killed by one on Seventh Avenue)
The insignificance of the sun and moon
A feeling akin to being at the bottom of a well
Central Park (it reminds me of a warmed-over meal)
The lower East Side with its dreadful old-law tenements
Park Avenue and its apartment houses like so many packing cases
The expression on the faces of most people
The smell of incompletely burned gasoline, of barber-shops, of Grand Street, of the garbage mountain with the locomotives on the top of it in Queens, of Chinatown, of the subway, of soda fountains
Movie palaces—with one or two exceptions
Delicatessen stores
Signboards and car signs
All travel by subway, tunnel or street car
The noon-hour crowd in front of establishments manufacturing garments
Suburbs—with a few exceptions
The outside of power houses
The gentlemen with no immediate purpose in life around Times Square
The ripping open of streets—like a public operation
Filling stations
Trees—probably because I love trees
Dust, dirt, and cinders
Most restaurants, particularly cafeterias (In Paris the reaction is mainly pleasurable. Why the difference?)
The huddle of skyscrapers around the Grand Central—the big bullies
City refuse on Long Beach—even on Fire Island, forty miles away

These lists give, I fear, a shattering insight into the shortcomings of the compiler's character, but they are at least honest. There is not a "wise-crack" in either category. These are the sorts of things which alternately elevate and depress that unique system of electrons which comprises my earthly temple. You, gentle reader, will disagree in detail, but will you disagree in general? Our electronic systems may diverge but all follow a basic pattern known as *homo sapiens*. What the lists say, in essence, is this:

There are more painful than pleasurable sensations in one's contact with a huge American city of the present day.

Pleasure is found in sudden glimpses, in certain lights on architectural masses, in occasional arresting and amusing adventures, in the arts which the great city has to display.

Pain is found in noise, dust, smell, crowding, the pressure of the clock, in negotiating traffic, in great stretches of bleak and dour ugliness, in looking always up instead of out, in a continually battering sense of human inferiority.

These mile-high walls are everything, man is nothing. In Boston and Washington the walls were negotiable; one could respect oneself. That was years ago. Now the traffic roars on Boylston Street and Pennsylvania Avenue as it does at Herald Square. Internal-combustion engines are not so dwarfing as mile-high walls but in such boiling steel masses they overawe the pedestrian, force him below the plane of human dignity. Why should we scamper like rats rather than walk like men?

II

Megalopolis is not a pleasant home for many of its citizens, awake or asleep. Even for those—and they may be the majority—whose pleasure quotient exceeds the pain, the gross volume of the latter, however unconscious, does much to retard a gracious and civilized life. Look at the faces in the street. The

machine has gathered us up and dumped us by the millions into these roaring canyons. Year by year more millions are harvested, the canyon shadows deepen, the roar grows louder. No man, no group of men, knows where this conglomeration of steel and glass and stone, with the most highly complicated nervous system ever heard of—a giant with a weak digestion—is headed. So, with an open field, I make bold to present three main alternatives:

First—Megalopolis can continue its present course of becoming increasingly congested, hectic, and biologically alien to an ordered human life; its vast transportation systems pumping us back and forth from "places where we would rather not live to places where we would rather not work"—until a saturation point is reached. This may take the form either of a sudden and disastrous technical breakdown or a less dramatic surfeit of citizens with their environment, resulting in steady emigration and an ultimate collapse of land values. In the case of New York, with its twenty billions on the assessors' rolls, such a collapse would rock the financial structure of the nation. A mechanical breakdown is not as probable for horizontal cities, such as Washington; but Clarence Stein, the distinguished architect, regards it as very probable for vertical cities such as New York.

Second—By virtue of an aroused public opinion or of a benevolent dictatorship—of which there are few signs to date—it is conceivable that in the case of those cities which had not entangled and enmeshed themselves beyond all human aid, drastic measures of coordination and preplanning might be introduced, fundamental enough really to adapt Megalopolis to civilized existence. We have the technical knowledge to do it, machines are always ready to help as well as to hinder; we have the engineering ability, and even for some areas the specific blueprints. But nobody has yet found a practical way to reckon with the land speculator and his colossal pyramid of values, duly capitalized on congestion. As Mr. Lewis Mumford acutely points out, the trouble with American cities is not that they have not been planned, but that the plan —in the configuration of a gridiron—has had no other purpose than to provide the most advantageous method for selling and reselling real estate. Cities have been laid out for profitable speculation, not for human use, and in the defense of that plan the most powerful forces in the Republic have fought, now fight, and will fight so long as they can stand and see. It is for this cogent reason that no fundamentally constructive program can be anything more than "impractical." In such a city as Washington, laid out a century ago with an eye to living rather than to rent collecting, the chances of introducing the necessary adjustments are, of course, somewhat brighter than in Chicago or Philadelphia or New York.

Third—Whether we save our cities by functional planning or continue somehow to exist in their ever grimmer canyons, there is always the possibility that on some fine morning a swarm of bombing planes will appear above the skyscraper tops, laugh heartily at the impotent clamor of anti-aircraft guns and, by means of a few judicious tons of radium atomite, poison gases, and, shall we say, typhus-fever cultures, dropped at strategic points, put an end to our hopes or to our miseries, as the case may be, and that quite finally. In the next war it is the great city which is to come in for the most intensive extermination. Upon this point all military experts of any intelligence seem singularly unanimous.

I shall not examine this last alternative in any detail. It deserves mention and is now mentioned. Perhaps there will be no more wars. Perhaps by virtue of the League of Nations and Mr. Kellogg and Messrs. Hoover and MacDonald arm in arm, the institution of war now stands officially liquidated. Your smile answers mine. And as you smile

you accept unreservedly the probability of another major conflict. There is always the chance, of course, that it will not be your city which the enemy selects for scientific experimentation. But it will be some hefty member of *genus megalopolis*, and probably more than one.

Turning now to the more immediate enemy within. What are the chances of technical breakdown? Is a saturation point approaching? What is the evidence, beyond the likes and dislikes of one insignificant citizen, that Megalopolis provides physically and spiritually an alien home? First let us sketch briefly its nervous system.

Below its streets you will normally find:

1. Water mains—from six inches to six feet in diameter. If the latter burst, they "cause more havoc than dynamite"
2. Gas mains—spreading wholesale death if punctured
3. Steam mains—carrying heat from central plants to office buildings, and also temperamental
4. Sewers—some of them big enough to drive a truck through, and not particular where they end
5. Subways—140 miles of them in New York. In some places there are four tubes one below the other. They carry the equivalent of the total population of the United States every two weeks. The whole system is now being doubled at the cost of $700,000,000. It will only make congestion worse. Blasting must be carried on close to four-foot water mains, while many men die from silica dust. ("Fifty-seven per cent of all rock drillers, blasters, and excavators examined were suffering from a probably fatal pulmonary disease resulting from the inhalation of rock dust")
6. Electric light and power cables
7. Telephone cables—up to 2400 wires on a single cable
8. Telegraph cables
9. Pneumatic mail tubes
10. Sidewalk vaults—always good hosts to sewer gas, as we shall see

Here are ten subterranean nerves—that is, theoretically subterranean. As a matter of fact, it is a dull day on any block when gentlemen in goggles and dun-colored overalls, armed with prodigious flares and ripping mechanisms, are not hauling one or another of the arteries towards the surface, to pound and batter them unmercifully. In a hundred yards of street, I counted eleven separate assaults in a week. Four of them cost me a good many hours' sleep. But Dante would have enjoyed the midnight spectacle.

On and above the surface is another great series of nerves, equally important if less mysterious. It comprises:

1. Bridges and causeways which admit traffic, particularly foodstuffs, to the city
2. Trolley lines
3. Elevated railways
4. Railroad terminals and switch yards
5. Milk and ice supply, the truck delivery service generally
6. Traffic control
7. Fire-fighting apparatus
8. Ambulance, hospital, and burial services
9. Garbage and waste collection—an obstreperous nerve
10. Street cleaning and snow disposal
11. Building and safety inspection
12. Elevator service—without which hardly more than ten per cent of normal business could be carried on
13. Radio wave-length control. And soon
14. The maintenance of landing fields, and the control of transportation by air

There is hardly an item in either the subterranean or the surface systems which is not cardinal to the continued functioning of Megalopolis. If one prime nerve is cut for any length of time, the urban environment starts rapidly to disintegrate, leaving the wayfaring man—who has not the faintest notion of the technic which provisions him—as helpless as an airplane in a tail spin. For him the water supply runs no farther back than the faucet; the food supply than the delicatessen store. Furthermore, so interlocked is the whole structure that the failing of one nerve is almost sure to result in the rupture of others.

That these arteries are not functioning altogether smoothly some recent occurrences demonstrate. Last December a mile of London streets was suddenly ripped open by gas explosions—"thrown into the air like confetti." Many citizens were hurt, while the surrounding population was frightened as it had not been since the Zeppelin raids. The property damage was immense. The Surveyors Institution proceeded to investigate this and other mysterious gas explosions and has recently handed down its report. It finds that automobiles and trucks are now putting a strain on road surfaces and the terrain thereunder which they were never designed to meet. Pipes, conduits, and mains continually increase their diameters; the load from above grows heavier, and the vitally essential cushion of earth between the two grows scantier. Steel, like flesh and blood, is subject to fatigue. Iron and steel mains suffer an accelerating deterioration due to vibration and the sudden temperature changes which the scantier earth promotes. Proper inspection is utterly impossible under modern traffic conditions. Meanwhile the steady removal of trees and the open spaces of loose earth about them takes away the natural outlets through which gases may harmlessly escape. Increasingly, gases are compressed beneath a solid roof of stone, brick, and asphalt. "The closing of these outlets," says the Institution, "results in either the accumulation of gaseous mixtures in abandoned sewers and subsoil cavities, or gas may penetrate laterally into adjoining vaults and basements. Actual ignition may occur through the use of a naked light or from a spark produced by the short circuiting of an electric fitting." As the vault and its inhabitants take their skyward way, it is often difficult to determine which method of ignition furnished the inciting cause.

A great surgeon has given his life to mitigating human suffering. He established a clinic in the city of Cleveland. Suddenly he found himself working desperately to save the lives not only of his patients but of his colleagues and hospital staff. For forty-eight uninterrupted hours he labored, but at the end more than a hundred persons were dead. An unknown gas had exploded in the X-ray film room, to kill every human being whose lungs it touched. Thus a place of healing had turned into a shambles—no man quite knowing why.

A few weeks later a coroner's jury of pathologists and chemists in Chicago were trying to determine how methyl chloride was liberated in artificial ice machines and why it had just killed fifteen people.

> Among those who testified at the inquest was Dr. Robert Jacobson. He told the jury that he had attended the family of Mr. and Mrs. Irving Markowski of 4856 Milwaukee Avenue, when three young children became ill and died mysteriously. The physician said the same slight odor that was present in the Clark apartment was also in the Markowski home and that he had become convinced that all had died of methyl chloride. . . . Several representatives of the ice machine company also testified, and said that 1500 of their refrigerators were in use in Chicago.

Not long ago the Muggerberg Company of Hamburg, Germany, allowed phosgene gas to escape through its stacks at night. It formed a blanket over the city and, before it could be dissipated, eleven persons had been suffocated to death.

On one page of one newspaper we read the headlines:

> Sixteen Killed and Seven Injured in Factory Blast.
> One Burned to Death, Twenty-five Overcome in Gas Explosion.
> Man Rescues Four in Ammonia Blast.

In New York, the ninth car of a subway express jumped the track at Times Square, crashed through a concrete wall and was cut in two. All safety devices were working, but the switchman's normal reflexes were momentarily in abeyance. This "man failure" cost 17

killed and 101 wounded. The situation in the tunnel at the rush hour was indescribable. Can we expect ever to eliminate man failure in the gigantic pressure of the rush hour? Cars with seats for 44, straps for 56, a total of 100, now carry 252 persons at the morning and evening peaks. The close-up as the last sardines are kicked and battered into their cans, strong-armed guards assisting, is likewise indescribable. Indeed, subways have been shrewdly designated by Mr. E. K. Lindley as "feedpipes for skyscrapers," constituting the perfect vicious circle. The higher the skyscrapers, the more subways are dug to fill them. The greater the subway capacity, the more skyscrapers are reared to absorb it. Thus the new Eighth Avenue line in New York produces automatically a new one hundred and ten story building on Eighth Avenue.

A short circuit in a power house at Fiftieth Street started a tiny fire, but a smoky one. Almost instantly all power left the Grand Central Station. Throughout the night no train could move in or out. In the tunnels powerful electric engines came helplessly to rest, and the frightened passengers climbed ladders through manholes to the street. The great haughty continental expresses stopped at the city limits. Suburbanites milled and jostled in the terminal, ultimately to decide that it was a long walk home, and to begin searching for a bed.

Two thousand truck drivers recently threatened to strike in one great city. Immediately the entire perishable food supply was imperiled. If they could have held their ranks, a mortgage on the City Hall would not have been too great a price to buy them off. Nor would two thousand have been necessary. An engineer once explained to me how one hundred key technicians in power houses, flood-gate stations, and signal towers could bring the entire life of Megalopolis to an abrupt conclusion. A tiny piece of carelessness in a Springfield generating station shut off all light and power from the city for many hours. Business was brought to a standstill, traffic ceased, one factory alone lost 3,500 man hours.

An epidemic may secure a start in an hour's time from an unnoticed flow of polluted water into the municipal supply. It is physically impossible for chemists to analyze water continuously in order to determine how much chlorine is needed to purify it. And here at last is a ray of sunshine. A Swiss has invented an "automatic chemist," which keeps the chlorinating process on duty twenty-four hours in the day. It was exhibited recently but has yet to be adopted and installed by any American city. It induces speculation as to how many other vital services are in need of similar automatic controls.

III

So much for the factor of technological tenuousness. The nerves of Megalopolis are jumpy, and under the going custom of hit-and-miss nobody makes it his business to find out how jumpy, or to plan any rational system for lessening the pressure. The drift is toward an even worse confusion, and so, inevitably, toward the possibility of an ever more serious technical collapse.

Let us turn now to human nerves. The wayfaring man remains sublimely unaware of a chlorine deficiency in his water until an epidemic overwhelms him, but motor cars and their collateral smells and noises pursue him every moment of the day and night. In the first eight months of 1929, 821 persons were killed by automobiles in the streets of New York, against 666 during a similar period in 1928. Deaths in all American cities from this cause have increased nine per cent in the current year. In less than two years motor cars have killed as many people in the United States as there were American soldiers killed in the War and wounded seven times as many as there were soldiers wounded. One in three of the fatalities is a child under fifteen. City-driving speeds have doubled in twenty years.

As I go about American cities, and particularly as I drive about them in taxicabs, I notice how the margin of safety continually declines. Where I allow, let us say, a five-foot tolerance when driving myself, the taxicab chauffeur will cut it to two feet, one foot, aye, to nothing at all. Indeed, I have been forced to give up back-seat driving altogether. I cannot bear to forecast the probabilities of such narrow margins. At the present time motor traffic is operating on inches where it used to operate on yards. Probably the only thing which saves us from ten times the death toll is that when we are not cutting corners on one wheel, we are hopelessly stalled in a frozen traffic jam. Recently, on foot in New York, I started with a bus at Washington Square, and proceeded north along Fifth Avenue. At Fifty-ninth Street I halted and, taking out my watch, counted out fifteen minutes before that particular bus appeared. The trouble is that the nervous strain of waiting makes for an embittered recklessness when the lanes are opened up—and no better evidence of that strain can be found than in the insane tooting of every horn in the whole congealed mass. The Queensboro Bridge has been christened by a New York editor, The Bridge of Nervous Breakdowns. "Given a reasonable expectancy of life, steady nerves, infinite patience, and a Christian resignation to fate, a man will no doubt get from one end of it to the other. But how many of us can boast these qualities at 6 P.M.?" He calls for double-decking—which, when the news is abroad, would, one fears, simply mean doubling the nervous breakdowns.

The evening of Labor Day, 1929, was unbearably hot and sultry. It was—according to the sublime processes of the New York holiday custom—the evening selected by some three million people to return to town. Two million had spent the day at Coney Island (and there is one of Megalopolis' most incredible sights: lucky the man who can fight his way into the water on such a day) or at Long Beach or Rockaway Beach or Atlantic City; the other million comprised the returning vacationists. Twenty-two persons were killed on the streets. Eighteen sections of extra trains arrived simultaneously at the Grand Central Station. The subways were choked beyond all endurance; trains ran ninety minutes late; buses, five hours late; the jam of the Holland Tunnel under the Hudson River was so prodigious that incoming motorists left their cars in every New Jersey gutter and fought for standing room on the ferries or in the tubes. Bumper to bumper, the steel files ran thirty, forty miles into the country over the Albany Post Road, the Boston Post Road, the Merrick Road, the Jericho Turnpike; with bed long after sun-up for those at the remoter ends of the file. Thus Megalopolis enjoys its holiday.

Citizen A: "Are you going to the country for the week-end?"

Citizen B: "How could I get back?"

It would be a great mistake to suppose that such conditions are found only in New York. Manhattan is a sublime exhibit, but one to which every other American city aspires with the utmost enthusiasm. Look at the skyscrapers shooting out of the Texas plain—congestion deliberately created amid unending square miles of open space. I sometimes wonder if the erection of lofty buildings does not often transcend the economic basis altogether. How many are built for the sheer satisfaction of registering the highest altitude yet reached; how many to expand the ego of the promoter?

British scientists predict the coming of the deaf age owing to metropolitan noises and, justly enough, select New Yorkers as the first who are to lose their hearing. Herald Square, according to Doctor Free's instrument, is fifty-five sensation units above quiet. To talk to a person in front of Macy's one must shout as loudly as to a person more than half deaf. Ordinary street noises pro-

duce a result comparable to that of one-third deafness, with certain locations doubling this rate. A badly serviced truck will make five times as much clamor as one of the same make in good repair. But where is space for the repair shops? Typists require nineteen per cent more energy to work in a noisy room than in a quiet one. Twenty per cent of all office workers' energy is wasted combating sound. The Wright Whirlwind motor and the New York subway both register seventy-five units on Doctor Free's machine, five units higher than a riveting machine in full cry.

The Health Commissioner of New York tells us that people are taking to drugs and sedatives to make them sleep. In the laboratories of Colgate University white rats, continuously exposed to normal city sounds, grow less, eat less, are less active and playful than their brothers exposed only to quiet. School children, it has been found, are very seriously handicapped in their work by street noises. To make matters worse, it has been determined that short skirts increase the racket. Legs bounce the sounds back, where millions of yards of textiles on city streets used to absorb a measurable fraction! Professor Spooner of Oxford, overwhelmed by such facts, calls despairingly upon the League of Nations to attack the problem. "Never," he says, "has civilization been confronted with such a malignant plague."

Not to be outdone by Doctor Free, Mr. Howard C. Murphy, a heating and ventilating engineer, has invented a machine for measuring dust, and so deluged us with another shower of gloomy statistics. The dirtiest city in America is St. Louis, fighting its way through 17,600 dust particles per cubic foot—with Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Detroit, in that order, following close behind. New York for once loses its crown, having only 9,700 particles per cubic foot; but this is about four times as much as in country air. Winter death rates in cities have now passed summer death rates "due to one outstanding factor—smoke, dust and contaminated air." Meanwhile, though the sun may occasionally shine, all health-giving ultra-violet rays are completely excluded by the dome of dust and smoke which forever hangs above the skyscraper tops.

In brief, Megalopolis, for all its gaudy show, its towering architecture, its many refinements and cloistered comforts, is not physically fit for ordinary people to live in. And as the noise, dust, accident, explosion, and traffic congestion figures show, it grows continually worse. The technological limits of the machine have been repeatedly outraged until now the tangle of vital nerves is so complicated and involved that it is safe to say no one understands them or realizes in the faintest measure the probability and extent of some major lesion.

This, the first of the three alternatives submitted earlier, is my favorite for the future of great cities. They will drift blindly into breakdown. The final collapse may be very sudden and very terrible, due, let us say, to unendurable pressures of underground gases. Or, and more probably, Megalopolis will become so alien to normal living that even Jews, with two thousand years of urban adaptation in their inheritance, will leave it. Nor will the irate citizen return until guaranteed space in which to breathe, move, and function adequately. This will demolish the whole structure of land values, and in the end demand the complete rearrangement of metropolitan anatomy.

IV

Can we reverse the process, and rearrange before the breakdown? Logically we can, psychologically we probably shall not. No one in his senses would advocate that Megalopolis should abandon its mechanical arteries, and go back to the London of Doctor Johnson. But it is difficult to see why anyone in his senses should not demand that tech-

nological tenuousness be adequately appraised and squarely met. If we are to live in mechanical cities—and that is the path we have chosen—we ought to respect the mechanism. If the structure of real estate values—the subway-skyscraper complex, for instance—insists on choking the mechanism, then we ought either to abolish the structure and run the city on sound engineering principles or abolish the city as a complicated mechanical phenomenon altogether. Nor can the choice be indefinitely delayed.

If we want a city to use and enjoy we must give up great sections of the real estate racket. It must be planned for function, its nervous channels protected with space, open areas, "balanced loads," adequate and incessant supervision. Dynamite as a clearing agent must be freely employed, a whole new orientation of work areas, play areas, home areas, established. If the landlord refuses to budge, then dynamite the landlord—by vigorous condemnation proceedings if you prefer. Technically the thing is complicated, but certainly negotiable. One can nominate a dozen engineers and architects who, given a free hand, could make even New York genuinely habitable and reasonably safe within a decade—and at a cost not so much greater than that of the new subway program. Dynamite is relatively cheap.

But the job would have to be done with the same high-handedness and vigor which characterized the War Industries Board when, overriding a thousand encrusted traditions and petty rights, it put the nation on a war footing. A perfectly ruthless civic will must operate. Tear down a square mile here, a square mile there. Obliterate this reeking slum. Double the width of this street; abandon and build on that one. Construct great causeways to by-pass through traffic. A year in Sing Sing for any loud speaker audible after ten o'clock. No private motor cars at certain hours below Fifty-ninth Street, New York, and only 15,000 taxicabs. Two years in Atlanta for an unserviced truck making five times the noise it should. Fifty thousand trees to be set out immediately. Sidewalk cafés to be widely encouraged. Half of all subways to be permanently sealed, with a two-day festival and free beer. Three years in the Andaman Islands for a reeking chimney. Garbage to be completely carbonized and by-producted. Four years on Nova Zembla for polluting river or harbor waters with oil refuse. Forty per cent of all industry to move outside the city limits to designated areas. (Suburbanites can thus commute *outward* as well as inward to their work.) The death penalty for all the officers and employees of companies caught broadcasting advertising matter from airplanes (as recently recommended by a hospital doctor in a letter to the *World*). And so on.

You are smiling again. But I am not. When I think of the city fit for the high gods to live in which modern engineering might build . . . when I think of what Megalopolis might be . . .

ESCAPE DE LUXE

A MEMORY OF 1918

BY JAMES NORMAN HALL

EVERY man has his pleasant memories. At least, I hope he has, and enough of them to draw upon indefinitely when in a reminiscent mood. I count myself particularly fortunate in one of this sort; or rather, it is a series of related memories all having to do with the Great War. In the autumn of 1918, with three companions, I made what might, perhaps, be called an escape from a German prison camp—an escape de luxe. Then, upon reaching Paris—however, let me proceed more methodically.

In Germany, in the province of Bavaria, there is a town called Landshut, situated on the banks of the river Isar. It is an ancient town, dating back to feudal times, and I have heard it said that during the Thirty Years' War Gustavus Adolphus refrained from destroying it for the reason that he was unwilling to make a blot of desolation on so green and peaceful a landscape. I can well believe this. One might travel many a day's journey without finding a pastoral country more beautiful or a town better suited for the habitation of quiet, home-loving people.

Back of the town, on a hill that rises some hundreds of feet above it, is an old castle called the Schloss Trausnitz, belonging at one time to the dukes of Lower Bavaria. During the Great War a part of it was used as a prison camp for aviators, and here it was that I found myself one midsummer afternoon in the year 1918. I say "found myself" with reason, for, although I had then been an unwilling guest in Germany for some time, I was still dazed as a result of the sudden change from the eventful life of aerial warfare to the dreamy monotonous existence in a prison camp. How I came to be there is a story in itself, but not pertinent to this one. It is enough to say that I had set out one fine May morning with two companions —each of us flying a small single-seater combat plane—from an aerodrome near Toul, for the purpose of pursuing some hostile aircraft. We closed with them in the vicinity of Pont-á-Mousson and, to make the story as brief as was the event itself, almost before I could have said the Lord's Prayer, I was pulled out of what had once been a pursuit plane, not far from the village of Pagny-sur-Moselle, in Germany as it then was. Time was needed to accustom myself to the abrupt change in fortunes, diet, and habits of life. For some weeks I lay in a ward of a German war hospital, gazing at the fly-specked ceiling. When I was again able to walk I did what I was told and went where I was told, in a kind of waking dream, more than half believing that I should presently return to full consciousness and find Antoni, our squadron orderly, shaking me by the shoulder to waken me for an early morning patrol.

By degrees this sense of unreality wore off, giving place at length to an almost painful awareness of present circumstances. Not that the circumstances in themselves were particularly unpleasant. On the contrary, we were

well housed, decently fed and, on the whole, treated more generously than we had reason to expect as prisoners of war. Being officers, we were not required to work and had nothing to do from day's end to day's end except to answer to our names at an occasional roll call. But the monotony of the existence was hard to endure, accustomed as we had been to daily adventures of the most stirring kind. There were seven peals of bells (or was it eight?) in the town of Landshut, and every quarter of an hour they rang from as many church towers, reminding us with ruthless persistency that once winged hours were now leaden-footed and pedestrian. The last of the bells to sound was that in St. Martin's Kirke, and after its final, deliberate, sonorous clang, the sound lingered indefinitely in the air as though it were audible time reluctant to be gone. Those days were longer than the longest days of childhood.

Nevertheless, time passed, and we occupied our abundant leisure as best we could. We talked of old combats that seemed to have happened centuries ago, in the course of a previous existence. Or we lay in our grass-grown recreation yard, looking up longingly at the blue sky, finding it hard to believe that we had ever wandered through those pathless meadows, to say nothing of having fought battles there. For, in those days, the conquest of the air was a dream only just realized, and the wonder and strangeness of it still dazzled men's minds and appealed to imaginations not yet accustomed to a fact so new in the world's history. Only ten years before, the Wright brothers had made in France their first sustained flights of a few moments' duration, and at the beginning of the Great War no one, unless it was H. G. Wells, dreamed that within three years' time the skies would be all but darkened by planes fighting aerial battles there.

Ours was a typical crowd of airmen prisoners: day bombers, night bombers, reconnaissance and artillery-réglage pilots, combat pilots, or *pilotes de chasse* as the French called them—we represented all branches of the Air Service of various Allied nations and we bore on our persons and uniforms evidence of the mischances that had brought us tumbling out of the air and had swept us to that sleepy old town, far beyond the tumult and clamor of war. Some of the men were on crutches, some hobbled slowly about with canes, some had been horribly burned about the hands and face, others bore the livid scars of just healed bullet wounds. We had youth in common, memorable adventures in common and, despite our various nationalities, we spoke the common language of all soldiers who knew by experience the realities of modern warfare. Furthermore, we had met a common fate, or, more truthfully perhaps, an uncommon one, for we were still alive. Above all, we joined in being heartily bored with the tediousness of existence within a walled, carefully guarded enclosure.

As time went on the roll calls became more frequent, and they were even held at unexpected hours during the night; for various attempts at escape had been made, and in some of them small parties had succeeded in gaining their freedom, temporarily at least. At last those of us who remained—although we had not lost hope—were so rigorously watched that any further break seemed foredoomed to failure. Whereupon ennui became boredom, or boredom ennui, whichever term is the more expressive for this disease in its aggravated form.

One morning toward the end of the summer we were lounging in the recreation yard, "enjoying" our condition in gloomy silence, when the bell at the main gate jangled loudly. The sergeant of the guard answered the summons, and who should come in but Herr Pastor, who was always an acceptable visitor with us. He was the German inspector for all the prison camps in Bavaria, and it was his office to listen to complaints and to perform such services for us as lay within his power.

He greeted us in his affable, somewhat ironic manner, and sat down for a few moments' chat.

"Well, gentlemen," he said, "you all look rather moody this morning. What is the matter? Have they cut down your bread ration? Or have they forgotten to put vegetables in the soup?"

"They take away our shoes now at evening roll call," a lieutenant replied, with the air of one stating a melancholy fact rather than a complaint. Herr Pastor threw out his hands in a "what would you?" gesture.

"You *will* insist on trying to leave us," he said, "and we don't want to lose you. Your commandant thinks you will be less eager to go if you know that you must walk to Switzerland in your stocking feet. And *I* think he is right."

The Swiss border was two hundred miles distant from Landshut. We had to admit that this was a legitimate as well as an excellent tactical move on the part of the commandant.

"What's the news at the front, Herr Pastor?"

"News? Gentlemen, I don't want to discourage you, so ask me not for news. I will admit this, however, if it is any comfort to you: Paris is not yet in our hands."

"How much longer do you think the War will last?"

"Not more than two years at the outside, and probably not later than the autumn of 1919."

"You don't mean that! Another year, or perhaps two, of this life? The last one of us will be dead on your hands, of boredom, before Christmas."

"Nonsense! Why not look on the bright side of things? You ought to be jolly glad that you're here rather than at the front. The air battles of the past two months have been on an unprecedented scale, enormous formations engaging one another, and planes falling like autumn leaves."

"Have we still the mastery of the air?"

"Still? My dear fellow, don't be facetious. The Allies are doing what they can, of course, and I grant that your men have courage. But so have ours, and our new Fokkers are vastly superior to anything you have in the air. But I must be going. I'm taking the midday train for Munich. Any commissions for me there?"

"Yes," one man said; "could you by any chance get us some English books?"

Now a curious thing was that theretofore we had scarcely, if at all, thought of books. Some of us had been in hospitals recovering from wounds or burns or broken bones; others had been shifted from prison camp to prison camp, enjoying a sort of personally conducted Cook's tour of Germany; and with our wartime experiences and our plans for escape to think and talk about, we had not felt the need of other distraction. But now the monotony of prison life had begun to bite deeply, and we all seemed to become book-hungry at the same moment. We joined in urging Herr Pastor to save us from dying of boredom by providing us with something to read.

The result was that a few days later we received from Munich a packing-case filled with books, nearly two hundred, chiefly the paper-bound volumes in the Tauchnitz editions of British and American authors, published at Leipzig. The selection was a catholic one to say the least: Bernard Shaw, Marie Corelli, Carlyle, Mrs. Oliphant, H. G. Wells, F. Marion Crawford, Emerson's *Essays*, Hall Caine—one man's meat and another man's poison all jumbled higgledy-piggledy in one box. I remember how eagerly we pawed them over and then, in order that every man might have a fair chance at the books he most wanted, a librarian was appointed to loan them out singly and for a period of not longer than one week.

I chanced to be the librarian and set to work at once, sorting them over and arranging them in piles on a barrack-room table. Upon reaching the bottom of the packing-case I found a dozen or

more second-hand books in cloth or leather bindings. I picked up one of them, a beautifully made octavo edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* that looked as though it had been knocking about the world from reader to reader for a century or two.

To say that I was pleased is to state the case mildly. I knew that I had found a sovereign remedy for prison-camp ennui. In fact, it began to work its magic at once, and I was surprised when the door suddenly opened and a chorus of voices exclaimed at once:

"Well, I'll be damned!"

"Look at our librarian, you chaps!"

"Hey! This isn't what we appointed you for!"

"Where's the book catalogue you were supposed to be making out?"

"He's been sitting here reading all the morning!"

This last is an overstatement of the case, but it is true that an hour had passed and in a flash of time. I resumed my duties at once and, being an honest librarian, I placed *The Canterbury Tales* among the others on the table when the time came to draw books. One man picked up the volume and turned the leaves idly. "Good old Chaucer!" he said. That was an anxious moment, but to my relief he chose one of Arnold Bennett's novels instead. And I may as well say now that *The Canterbury Tales* fell to my lot every week. No one else cared to read it. Some men, I suppose, were repelled by the quaint English, not knowing how easy it is to get the hang of it, once a few pages have been read. One lieutenant to whom I tentatively suggested it said, "Hell, no! I had all the Chaucer I wanted at school." He must have had some Dry-As-Dust as an instructor in Old English, who placed all the emphasis on obsolete words and spelling and the unfamiliar grammatical inflections. I remember with gratitude the man—he is dead now—who introduced half a dozen youngsters, myself among them, to *The Canterbury Tales*. In an hour's time he had taught us how to read them, and within three days he had made enthusiastic Chaucerians of every one of us. Thereafter he led us on a tour of the world of the fourteenth century where we read Chaucer by the way. We spent a delightful winter there.

But since those days, with the whole field of English literature to roam in, I had never reread the Tales, and I came back to them now with fresh delight. There are twenty-five of them in all and, in order to make the perusal last as long as possible, I resolved to read but one per week.

I will pass quickly over the events of the next two months. They were of no great interest: the customary roll calls, day and night, the arrival of mealtime, the somewhat boisterous business of hurling our shoes into the hallway before we were locked in at dusk, and the like. In addition, some further attempts to escape had been frustrated and the usual punishment inflicted upon those implicated—from two to four weeks' solitary confinement in the civil prison at Landshut. Meanwhile, the days were "drawing in," and the crisp autumn air was hazy with the smoke of burning leaves. In early October a new batch of airmen prisoners was brought in, and we learned from them that great events were happening at the front. We listened with amazement and delight to tales of aerial combats over towns and villages that, since the beginning of the War, had been many miles within the enemy lines. However, we were not too hopeful. The Germans had made retreats before, notably on the Somme, in order to shorten their lines of defense; and if worst came to the worst for them and they were forced back to the Rhine, they would undoubtedly make a stand there, we thought, in all but impregnable positions, and bring the Allied advance to a halt. The most optimistic of us believed that the War would go through the winter and the following summer.

It was, I believe, the last week in October that orders were received at our

camp for the removal of nearly all our number to the prison camp at Villingen, in the Black Forest country. The detachment left the same day, and when it had gone there were only four of us left at Landshut: Lieutenants Robert Browning, of Minneapolis, Charles Codman, of Boston, Henry Lewis, of Philadelphia, and myself—all pilots of the U. S. Air Service. We were lonely at first, but we soon became accustomed to the emptiness and silence of the prison yard; and for my own part, I found it very pleasant to sit basking in the wan autumn sunshine, reading *The Canterbury Tales*, looking up now and then at the moss-grown walls of the castle, whose stones had been put in place when Chaucer himself was walking the earth. Furthermore, it gave us a sense of importance to see all those guards pacing their high platforms with rifles over their shoulders, as though we were four unusually desperate men who required a deal of watching.

On the morning of the eighth of November—a raw, windy day—we had returned indoors after roll call. We were lodged in an ancient two-story stone building detached from the castle itself, which must have been the quarters for lackeys in feudal times. Lieutenant Browning was busy at the stove, cooking a savory stew of tinned beef, peas, and carrots, from food sent us through Switzerland by the Prisoners' Relief Committee of the American Red Cross. (How welcome those Red Cross supplies were to us, and how generously they were sent! In fact, we prisoners, once our weekly parcels from Berne began to arrive, lived as well, and better in some respects, than the Germans themselves, who lacked many things we were supplied with, such as soap, tobacco, tea and coffee, sugar, and the like. In view of this fact it was all the more surprising to me that so many of our parcels reached us intact. Nine out of ten of them—to make a conservative estimate—made the long journey from Switzerland, often by roundabout routes, without having been tampered with on the way, which speaks well for German honesty.) But to continue, Browning, as I have said, was preparing breakfast for the four of us, and Codman was lying on his bunk, reading. Lewis was sewing a patch on the seat of his only pair of breeches, worn thin by long contact with prison-camp benches, and I was sitting by the window, still following Geoffrey Chaucer on the pilgrimage to Canterbury.

Looking out of the window for a moment, I saw the guard being relieved, and with a lack of ceremony that surprised me. Usually the old guard marched out with their rifles sloped at the same precise angle and their hobnailed boots crunching the gravel as one pair; and the new guard marched to their places in the same brisk, disciplined fashion. But on this morning there was a slipshod helter-skelterness about the affair that drew my attention at once. I turned to Codman. "Come here a minute, will you, Codman?" I said. "See how they're changing the guard this morning." He came to the window, his book in hand, and as he did so we saw one soldier throw his infantryman's cap on the ground and stamp on it. Another followed his example. I could not have been more surprised if I had seen the prison gate standing open with no one to guard it.

Codman, who is nothing if not self-possessed, whatever the occasion, turned to me with a faint smile, blinking his eyes rapidly.

"I've just had a curious hallucination," he said. "I thought I saw those men throw their caps on the ground and kick them about."

By this time *Ober-Leutnant* Rheinstrom, the second-in-command at Landshut, had appeared, and stood with his back toward us, talking earnestly to the soldiers who had not yet taken their places along the walls. They listened with an air of reluctant, sullen attention. The Lieutenant's back was eloquent of persuasion, not command—a fact suffi-

ciently startling in itself. Meanwhile we had called Browning and Lewis to the window, and Browning, ruffling the waist-length beard he had sworn not to cut until he was again a free man, exclaimed, "By God, companions in misery! There's something rotten in Denmark!" There was, no doubt of it. We could not hear what was being said in the yard, but we saw Lieutenant Rheinstrom turn and look in our direction. He again addressed the men, or rather he seemed to be pleading with them, and a moment later they went with evident reluctance to their places.

I read no more in *The Canterbury Tales* that day or the next or the next. What had happened, as we later learned, was the revolution in Bavaria. The old regime in Germany was "tottering to its fall," as the journalists would say, and the air was charged with the electricity of the breaking storm. We felt it even in our confined and isolated position. Our commandant was grave and preoccupied, and Herr Capp, our usually jovial and carefree *Feldwebel*, looked as though he had seen a ghost in broad day. He had, in fact, seen a considerable number of dead men, for he had just returned from Munich where machine-gun fighting was taking place in the streets. We four prisoners, too restless and excited to sit still, walked round and round the path we had worn through the turf of the prison yard, wondering, conjecturing, keenly watching for new portents that would give us some inkling of the events we felt were impending.

Then we received another visit from Herr Pastor, and the moment I saw him I was conscious of a shock of disappointment, for he was not in the least excited and greeted us in his customary urbane, bantering manner.

"Well, gentlemen, I hope you are enjoying your solitude these fine autumn days?"

"Herr Pastor, what has happened?" Browning asked.

"Happened? What makes you think that anything has happened? Do you mean here in the camp?"

"No, no! What is taking place outside—at the front?"

The inspector took his pipe from his pocket and stuffed it in leisurely fashion with *ersatz* tobacco. We offered him some real tobacco from our Red Cross supplies, but he refused, saying that he had become so accustomed to smoking hay that he now preferred it to the best of the old pre-war mixtures. He lighted the pipe and let the smoke curl lazily from his nostrils. At last he said, "Yes, Browning, you are right. Something has happened. I am sure you'll all be sorry to learn of it, but the fact is the War is over. An armistice was signed at eleven o'clock this morning."

"What!" we all shouted at once.

But, no; to be quite accurate, for a moment we merely gaped at him. Lieutenant Codman was the first to recover.

"And so you've come to bid us farewell, Herr Pastor," he said in a gentle, deprecatory voice. "You've been more than decent to us, and in some ways we have really enjoyed our stay here. Well, good-by. Shall we go out at the main gate or the little one on the other side?"

"Herr Pastor, you're not joking, are you?" Lewis asked.

"If there's any joke about it, it's on us, not you," he replied. "No, the War is finished."

"Then let's get ready at once!" Browning exclaimed. "Oh, sweet land of liberty! Think of it! In an hour's time we shall be on our way to Paris!"

The inspector smiled faintly.

"Now, Browning, don't be in too great a hurry. I said that an armistice had been signed, not that there is to be an immediate release of prisoners. It may be several months before you see Paris again."

Then, in truth, we did all speak at once. We argued, pleaded, begged, cajoled. What was the sense in confining longer four inoffensive airmen,

thus tying up the services of so many guards who might be used to better purpose elsewhere? Granted that no arrangements had been made for the release of prisoners, it could do no harm to let us go. All that we asked was that a gate should be left inadvertently open; we would evaporate through that gate and make the best of our own way to the Swiss border or across the old trench lines to France. We would be his everlasting debtors if, etc., etc.

Herr Pastor walked up and down the prison yard for a moment, puffing vigorously at his pipe, as though he meant to lay a smoke screen for us at once, so that we might escape unnoticed. But this, alas, was not his intention. He came back to where we were waiting and stopped. "No," he said, "it's out of the question. You must be patient and wait until you can be released in the regular manner." But we refused to take his no. We returned to the attack again and again and at last wormed out of him a promise that he would at least "think it over." He was to remain in Landshut that night, and when he left the camp he promised us further that he would let us know his decision the following day.

That night we talked until the small hours and then lay in our bunks, staring into the darkness, thinking of many things, and trying vainly to realize that the War was at last over. After a long silence we heard Codman say, "What rotten luck!"

"What's on your mind, Codman?" I asked.

"I was thinking of those poor devils who died of the flu," he replied.

The week before we had been sent, under escort, to attend the funeral of some French infantrymen who occupied another prison camp in the vicinity of Landshut. The influenza epidemic was then ravaging Germany as it was other countries, and it had taken a heavy toll in this infantry camp. Several of the dead men had been prisoners since the autumn of 1914, and to be snuffed out just before the Armistice was indeed wretched luck.

"Lord!" said Lewis. "I hope that none of us come down with the flu at this last moment!"

"Now, Henry, no forebodings," said Codman. "Remember, to-morrow we shall be on our way to Paris."

II

And so we were. Toward noon the following morning Herr Pastor appeared. "You may go," he said. "I think it will be best for you to make for the Swiss border, by way of Munich, Lindau, and Lake Constance. Once you reach Switzerland, of course, you will have no further trouble. I have wired to a friend of mine, an artillery officer, at Lindau. He will meet you at the station there, so be on the lookout for a well-set-up man of thirty-five, with ruddy cheeks, blue eyes, and a small blond mustache. He wears a captain's uniform."

"And we can go *now?*" I asked hesitatingly.

"And do you mean that we are to go by *train?*" Browning added.

"You don't want to walk to Switzerland, do you?" said the inspector. "There is a train for Munich at twelve-thirty. You will have to stop the night there and leave for Lindau in the morning. If you succeed in getting through you will be at Romanshorn, in Switzerland, before dark to-morrow evening. Remember, this is an escape."

"Theoretically," I said.

"No, actually. I have no right to let you go and am doing so on my own authority. We have made no convention with the Allies as yet for the exchange or release of prisoners. Your commandant here is strongly opposed to what I am doing, so whatever happens, don't be so foolish as to be recaptured on the way. You might make it very awkward for me. Be circumspect and very self-effacing during this journey. With the revolution on in Bavaria you should

be able to get through if you have your wits about you. Everything is topsy-turvy just now."

We rushed off at once to get ready. We had little baggage, of course, and were in full marching order within three minutes. I paused briefly before our prison-camp library.

"How about taking some books along?" I suggested.

"Oh, to hell with books!" said Browning.

"Leave them for *Feldwebel* Capp; he's fond of English literature. I wish him joy of Mrs. Oliphant's novels," said Codman.

Nevertheless, I was not willing to part with *The Canterbury Tales*, so I slipped the volume into the pocket of my tunic.

Herr Pastor was waiting for us outside. We wrung his hand warmly. Then the ponderous iron-studded gate swung slowly open, and we marched down the hill.

The moment we were outside the castle walls the air felt purer and much more invigorating. We wanted to skip, goatlike, from rock to rock, down the steep hill, and restrained ourselves with difficulty. I remember little of the appearance of the streets through which we passed on the way to the station except that they were, fortunately, almost empty, it being the noon hour; and my only clear recollection of events by the way is of seeing a shaggy-haired youth in wooden-soled shoes, stooping to pick up a very short cigarette butt, still smoldering, that someone had dropped in the gutter. Although it seemed an hour, we had only ten minutes to wait for our train. We climbed into a second-class compartment that had two occupants, a nun in an enormous starched headdress, and a vigorous-looking old man with a snow-white beard. We took our places very quietly opposite them. Browning's beard quivered with excitement; Lewis bowed his head in a prayerful attitude; Codman glanced coolly through a time-table Herr Pastor had given us, as though he had just seated himself in a train at the South Station, in Boston, for a tedious daylight journey to New York. We clattered through the suburbs and a moment later were in open country.

We were, of course, in our American army uniforms, with the pilots' insignia of the Air Service on our tunics. The old man opposite us put his chin on the top of a gold-headed cane and scrutinized us item by item with a severe air. I caught his eye several times and immediately looked at the ceiling, to admire the decorations. Once he cleared his throat and I thought he was about to speak. If so, fortunately he thought better of it and gazed out of the window as though he had put us out of mind. I wondered what he was thinking of. He was a man of nearly eighty, I should say. What changes he had seen in those years! And now, in the late evening of his life he was witnessing a last stupendous change in the life of his country and of the world at large whose outcome he could not hope to see. The nun read her breviary, her lips moving silently.

The station at Munich was crowded with people, both civilians and soldiers. Along one wall a company of infantry stood by their stacked arms. A military policeman passed us, but he was evidently going somewhere in a hurry and didn't see us. We had no papers of any sort, of course, and had we been questioned we should have been hard put to it to explain our presence there. Several people looked curiously at us; but as Herr Pastor had said, everything was topsy-turvy in Bavaria, and we pressed on, unnoticed for the most part, in the crowd making for one of the station exits.

Our plan was to get out of sight as quickly as possible. If we loitered about the streets the chances were that we should be taken up; for men in the uniform of any of the Allied nations were not then to be seen in Germany outside of the prison camps. Therefore, eager though we were to see what was happening in Munich, we decided to be discreet.

We spied a hotel not far from the station and, as we had to take a chance somewhere, we agreed to take one there. We walked boldly through the lobby and up to the desk. I think it was to Codman's knowledge of German that we trusted. He asked for a room large enough to accommodate the four of us. The man behind the desk looked at us in a bewildered manner and said, "*Bitte schön?*" Codman repeated the request and added that we should like lunch served in our room. This he did in the coolest possible manner, as though it were a customary thing for men in the American Army uniform to be wandering about in Germany. The desk man glanced around the lobby, as though seeking some hint from the other people seated there as to what his line of action should be; but they were all gazing at us in evident astonishment and gave him no clue. So, after a good deal of hesitation, he said, "*Ja wohl, Hauptmann, nur ein Augenblick,*" or something of the sort. We were then ushered up to our room, where presently we tucked into a hearty meal, with excellent Munich beer to wash it down.

We spent an uneasy afternoon and evening, expecting at any moment to hear a knock at the door and to find ourselves in the presence of the military police. But we might have spared ourselves the anxiety; nor did we have the slightest trouble, the following morning, in boarding the train for Lindau. The time was "with child," so to speak, with great events; and in the midst of them, small events and small fry could pass unnoticed so long as they did not attract undue attention to themselves.

What a delightful journey that was among the wooded hills of Swabia! We were alone in our compartment most of the way and too happy to talk much. I brought forth my *Canterbury Tales*—for I now considered the volume mine; but much as I love Chaucer, I found it impossible to give him my undivided attention then. So I merely turned through the pages, examining the marked passages scattered throughout. It was an old copy, published in London nearly a century ago, and had evidently passed through many hands before coming into my own. There was a bookplate pasted in the cover, bearing a coat of arms and the name Roger Spurgeon printed at the bottom. There was also an inscription on the flyleaf: "To Phillip Sharpe, from his Uncle Richard. Bon Voyage: Portsmouth, June 10th, 1848," and on the same page, in a very neat hand, the name of yet another owner, "Lieutenant John Powell, 2nd battalion, K.O.S.B.," an abbreviation, doubtless, for the name of a famous British infantry regiment, the King's Own Scottish Borderers.

I wondered about these former owners of the volume—who they were, and under what circumstances they had read it. Lieutenant Powell, I imagined, must have been the last reader before myself. Perhaps he too had been taken prisoner or perhaps, more likely, he had been found dead back of the German lines in some great battle or hard-fought trench raid, whereupon the book had eventually found its way to a second-hand shop in Munich. It would have been interesting to know what its fortunes were from the day of its publication.

We reached Lindau late in the afternoon and waited on the platform while the other passengers were leaving the station. Then we were spied by an officer in captain's uniform. He approached us rapidly, made an abrupt halt, bowed slightly, and said, in English, "You wish to go to Switzerland, Messieurs? In that case, perhaps I can be of service to you. Will you follow me, please?"

All this seemed very odd. After our long imprisonment, and our many frustrated plots for escape, it was hard to realize that we were to be actually escorted out of Germany by an officer in the uniform of our erstwhile enemies. "If this is a dream, let me sleep on!" Browning said to me under his breath. "Look! Lake Constance! Oh, noble

sight!" We could see open water glimmering at the end of a street, and beyond, glowing softly in the light of the westering sun, the snowclad summits of the Alps. The artillery captain stopped at some distance from the quay and waited for us to catch up with him.

"There is your steamer, gentlemen," he said, "but I can't promise that you will be allowed to cross in her. However, try it. Walk aboard, and if you are turned back, there is still another possibility. You can go by land around the end of the lake. That might be a risky proceeding, but if you have to attempt it I will do what I can to help you. Of course, if you are arrested here—well, in that case I'm afraid there is nothing more to be done. You will understand that I can hardly be your advocate."

We thanked him warmly, went on to the landing, past two customs officers who regarded us more than suspiciously. However, we were not stopped, and we made ourselves scarce at once, retiring to the most retired corner of the little saloon. A few moments later, with an exultant toot—at least it seemed exultant to me—the little boat backed away from the quay and turned toward Switzerland. Looking out of a port, I saw our friendly officer going back into the town. I hope that fortune has granted him whatever his dearest wishes may have been. We came on deck just as the steamer was passing between two stone lions of heroic size, on either side of the harbor entrance, and that is the last I have seen of Germany to this day.

III

Three days later we were in Paris, and I confess that my recollection of the events of the next twenty-four hours are hazy indeed. Somehow, Browning, Codman, and Lewis mysteriously disappeared, and while searching for them at Henry's, the Chatham, Maurice's, and other favorite rendez-vous for airmen in Paris, I met two old flying comrades who I thought were dead, and who could hardly be convinced that I was not a ghost. Meetings of this sort were then taking place daily in Paris, and when old friends rise from the dead, so to speak, realizing at the same time that their prospects for living for some years to come are vastly brighter than they have been for many months—well, they may be pardoned perhaps for celebrating such happy occasions.

I remember, vaguely, sitting in a crowded, brilliantly lighted restaurant with my two friends and a British squadron commander with three rows of decorations on his tunic, who had appeared from nowhere. I also remember, much later that night, sitting with this same Englishman on a bench under a street lamp somewhere in Paris, but I am very hazy as to the precise locality. By that time my friends had vanished, and the Englishman and I were having a delightful chat about Chaucer and *The Canterbury Tales*. He loved them too, and now, with my book in his hand, he was reading aloud from "The Miller's Tale," strongly accentuating the rhythmical flow of the lines:

> This *dron*ken *mil*ler *spak* ful *sone* ageyn,
> And *seyd*-e, '*lev*-e *bro*ther *os*-e-*wold*,
> Who *hath* no *wyf* he *is* no *cok*-e-*wold*,
> But I sey *nat* ther*fore* that *thou* art *oon*.

To hear an English aviator, soused, plastered, pie-eyed (so was I) reading Chaucer in Paris at two A.M. is an experience to be remembered. The shade of Chaucer himself, had it been present at that moment, would, I believe, have smiled indulgently. And indeed, those who speak so disparagingly of "the demon Alcohol," must be those who have unwisely spent most of their lives in his service, or men who have never learned from experience what a delightful demon he can be when treated as he would like to be treated, not as a bosom friend but only as an occasional companion. The next morning, before the milk was distributed in Paris, I bade him and the British flying captain a casual good-by; and although I have at

times met the former since that day, my fellow Chaucerian has, I fear, vanished forever. I don't even remember his name.

I had not yet reported to the headquarters of the U. S. Air Service, on the Avenue Montaigne, for reassignment to duty, and I resolved to have one more day of perfect freedom before doing so. I strolled idly about the streets, flooded with mellow November sunshine, looking at the German cannon ranked along the Champs Élysées and around the Place de la Concorde. Those monsters, fantastically camouflaged, were silent and harmless now. Children slid down their long barrels or perched on the muzzles, rolling pebbles down their cavernous throats, and their elders looked on with a happy wondering expression on their faces. One saw happy faces everywhere, for in that period between the signing of the Armistice and the coming of the statesmen—or should I say, politicians?—with their staffs of experts, economic, ethnographic, geographic, time itself seemed to be standing still as though to give mankind a dateless period for remembrance, reflection, and preparation for the new world to come. One would have said that word had been received and spread abroad that the three-headed dragon of injustice, hatred, revenge, which had preyed upon men and nations since the dawn of history, was to be driven into outer darkness forever, and that a new world based upon reason, justice, and tolerance was really at hand. Then came the gathering of the vultures at Versailles, and what happened there we know.

Meanwhile I was wondering how I could best bring my own career as a soldier and airman to a fitting and memorable close. I had learned that my old squadron had been moved into Germany with the Army of Occupation. I didn't want to rejoin it. There would be too many new faces among the pilots, and I had had enough of Germany for the present. Furthermore, it would be anti-climactic, to say the least, to resume flying now that the War was over. Then, unaccountably, came a splendid idea. I am at a loss to account for the wisdom I displayed; perhaps my good angel plucked me by the sleeve and whispered to my inner consciousness that here was an opportunity not to be lost, for it would never come again. However that may be, the idea was this: I resolved, if possible, to have a last flight over the old front and then to say good-by forever to the Air Service.

As luck would have it, when I reported at Aviation Headquarters I was assigned to duty there, in connection with the gathering of some historical data for the Service. This suited my plan precisely; and one day shortly afterward, mustering up all the persuasive arguments I could think of, I invaded the sanctuary of General Patrick at a moment when I knew that he was alone. He looked up quickly as I entered.

"Yes? What is it?" he said, brusquely but not unpleasantly.

"General Patrick," I began, "I have a rather unusual request to make." I then went on, eagerly and hastily, to tell him who I was, what my present duty, and to formulate my request. He heard me through, tapping the table with the rubber end of a pencil, and when I had finished he was silent for a moment. Then he said, "Why do you wish to make this flight?"

"Solely for my own pleasure, if it may be called pleasure," I replied. "It will satisfy a need I can scarcely define if I can fly over the old front once more, and for the last time."

"How long would you expect to be gone?"

"Four or five days. A week at the most unless I should be held up by bad weather."

He reached for a pad, wrote something on it, and pushed it toward me across the table. "Good luck," he said. "Don't get yourself killed now that the War is over."

The paper was an order on the Operations Officer at the American aviation depot at Orly to provide me with a plane for "a special mission."

General Patrick has since retired from active service. No doubt he forgot this incident the moment I had left his office, but I shall always remember with deep gratitude that I owe to his kindness one of the most memorable experiences of my life.

Christmas passed and I was still waiting for favorable weather, for I wanted to make this journey under the best possible conditions. At last I decided to go, no matter what the weather, for I was daily in fear of receiving orders to return to the United States. So, on a cold January morning, with a high cloud ceiling through which the sun shone wanly, I took the bus for Orly. I had become a familiar sight to the Operations Officer there, having gone to the depot on earlier occasions, only to be turned back because of the weather.

"Same old luck," he said when he saw me. "It will be snowing before the afternoon."

"It doesn't matter," I replied. "I'm going to chance it. I'll land somewhere on the way if it gets too thick."

I went with a lieutenant, a test pilot, to the Spad hangars. They were filled with hundreds of planes fresh from the factories.

"Take your pick," he said. "We've got 'em to burn now." But I let him do the choosing, for he had tried out most of them. He chose a 180 h.p. Spad that looked thoroughly dependable, and five minutes later the Orly aerodrome was far away behind and below me.

What a glorious sensation it was to be flying again, after six months in a prison camp! I am grateful for the fact that I never became used to flying in the sense of being wearied with it. Every time I left the earth I felt exhilarated, lifted up in spirit as well as in body; but it was rather as though I had left my body behind and all the slowness and heaviness of corporeal existence.

I followed the Marne past Meaux, Château Thierry, Épernay, and at Châlons turned northward until I came within the inconceivable desolation of the old front. During the autumn and winter of 1917 my former squadron, the Escadrille Lafayette, had been stationed at various aerodromes along the Champagne front, and our sector for patrol had been from Rheims to the Argonne Forest. As I passed over the forlorn little village of Souain—how many times I had seen it from the air!—I was conscious of a quickening of the pulses, and instinctively I began to search the air, overhead, behind, beneath, for the presence of hostile planes, and I listened for the first rending roar of enemy anti-aircraft shells, a sound that had greeted us in former days as soon as we had crossed the lines. It was all but impossible to realize that one could now fly anywhere, in perfect safety.

I knew in advance that this would be a lonely experience; I had wanted it to be so, but I had no conception of how unutterably lonely it would be. The Allied armies were being rapidly demobilized, and those left in France had been moved either on into Germany or well back from the war-devastated areas to places where the men might have decent billets. There was no one, or almost no one, left in the old front-line areas. As for the air, it was as though men had never flown before. The sound of no motor save my own broke the profound stillness of that gray winter day.

I flew along just under the cloud ceiling, my mind filled with melancholy thoughts, and after passing over what had once been the village of Sommepy, I turned westward to make a circle over Rheims. Then I turned eastward again, following the old trench lines toward the Argonne. In the winter of 1917 an exceptionally fine German anti-aircraft battery had been stationed not far from Rheims, in the vicinity of St. Hilaire-le-Petit. Even on a clear day, when we were flying at five thousand

meters, this battery would bracket us so closely that our planes would be rocked crazily by the concussions, and often we came home at the end of a patrol with the fabric of wings or fuselage torn by pieces of shell casing. On a day of high clouds, when our Spads were clearly outlined beneath them, this battery gave us more than enough to think about, no matter how we might change direction from moment to moment. No other on the sector could be compared with it for marksmanship. My former feeling of uneasiness returned as I flew over that area.

At Dontrier, midway along the sector, I crossed the precise spot—if one may speak of a spot in space—where I had once seen a French three-seater reconnaissance plane burst into flame. After spinning this way and that for a thousand feet, its wings had crumpled and it had fallen vertically to earth. I had been close by at the time and had seen one gunner still firing his guns as the plane was falling; then he dropped them and, with his flying combination all afire, climbed out of his cockpit and leaped off. It seemed strange that the air over those battlefields should not have been scarred as they were, giving evidence of the events that had taken place there.

Presently I found a small patch of blue sky and climbed through into clear sunlight beyond view of the earth. For a time I gave myself up to the pure joy of flying, watching the tiny shadow of my Spad leaping from summit to summit of the cloudbank below. There was no danger of ambush now, no need to scrutinize those peaks of curling, shifting vapor for the presence of enemies. I flew through narrow canyons, watching the changing lights and shadows along their moving walls; and the lonely beauty of that upper world made me forget time and place until my engine began to sputter and misfire. I then remembered that I had been flying for a long time and that my supply of gasoline must be about exhausted. I turned the valve of the small auxiliary gravity tank and flew southward at once to seek some lodging for the night.

And now courtesy demands that I take leave of anyone who has been kind enough and persevering enough to follow me to the end of this long-winded tale. Perhaps, in fairness to myself, I should say that long as it is, I have by no means reached the end of it. However, I must show some compassion for the reader.

I still have that copy of *The Canterbury Tales*. Some day I shall have to part with it and go, however reluctantly, to join the company of Messrs. Spurgeon and Sharpe and Lieutenant Powell, and all former owners of the volume. I wonder what its further adventures will be?

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF A NEW M.P.

BY MARY AGNES HAMILTON

I HAD not been back in London two days after the results of the General Election had been declared, and had hardly lost the first thrill of my own success in the second, and bigger one—the possibility of a second Labor Government—when I met an old House of Commons hand, a man who had spent twenty years of his life at Westminster. "So, you're in," he said, regarding me with a smile. "Had a good fight?"

"Glorious!" (It was useless to try to pretend.) "Though I do feel rather overwhelmed by the responsibility. All those people believing one can do so much, believing in one so implicitly."

He shook his head, pityingly. "Well, you'll soon be disillusioned. And so will they. You'll find it's not at all what you expect."

This I had heard before. It is, apparently, what all old M.P.s tell all young ones.

"How do you know what I expect?" I tried to parry him. But he merely shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, whatever it is . . ."

I passed some of my colleagues in newness in review—Norman Angell, Lady Cynthia Mosley, Philip Baker, among the "intellectuals"; A. G. Walkden of the Railway Clerks, Gordon Macdonald of the miners, A. G. Cameron of the joiners, among the Trade Unionists; Frank Smith and W. Stephen Sanders among the "stalwarts" of the early days of the Labor movement—and felt that a place certain to disappoint expectations so varied must have some peculiar quality. To find any other common denominator among two hundred new M.P.s would certainly have baffled me. But here was one, ready-made—we were all to be disappointed. But my friend was going on:

"Of course, it's got its fascination. That's the worst of it. It's like drink—very few people who have once tasted it can bear to give it up."

Here, he doubtless spoke from the heart. But I did not succeed in getting from him any nearer approach to understanding what it was going to be like. I asked him whether it was a sort of perpetual conference—a vision which certainly did not attract me. He agreed that there was something of that in it, and added, "It's at its worst, of course, when your own government is in. . . ."

"Vote straight and keep your mouth shut, eh?"

"H'm, h'm . . . But, of course, it's the best club in the world."

That did make me shudder, for if there is anything I dislike more than a conference, it is a club.

A cloud of irrelevancies blurred the weeks that intervened between this unilluminating conversation and the solemn function of going, for the first time, to the House, making the first acquaintance with the rows of policemen, who now touch their caps to me as if I had always been a member, even hold up the traffic for me as I cross among the buses and taxis from Palace Yard to the corner of Whitehall; irrelevancies largely created by the newspapers, which still treat women in politics as an oddity and women M.P.s as if the woman swallowed up the M.P., whereas the

exact reverse is the case. On the day the House opened, a movie-tone photograph was taken of the nine Labor women members, who thus shared honors with the Cabinet; and, in the successive days, the press found more room for descriptions of our clothes than for any other incident of the proceedings.

"Brightening the House of Commons"—that appeared to be our function as seen from outside. Inside, it was different. Fourteen out of six hundred and fifteen is at once too many and too few: too many for particularity, too few to leaven the lump. The real sartorial event of the session was either the tussah suit of Mr. Macquisten or the gray "topper" worn by Major Graham Pole on the Government back benches. Inside, it would be hard for the most self-conscious (or sex-conscious) individual to retain any sense that her individuality counted. If that be a disappointment, it is one that the House delivers, automatically, to the least egotistical mind.

II

But the first impression made by the House is not mental. It is so definitely not mental that one has a sensation as though all the mental faculties were muffled in cotton wool, and the normal thinking apparatus put out of action by contact with something of too dense a tissue for it to cleave. My first impressions were certainly material, and material at a notably high degree of specific gravity.

Although the Chamber itself is small—far too small to accommodate more than two-thirds of its members on the comparatively rare occasions when they all desire to get within it—St. Stephen's itself is vast. Covering a large but curiously shaped superficial area, it is a congeries of intersecting passages, some lined with large leather-bound volumes, others fitted with row upon row of members' lockers—a circumstance which reinforces the impression that one is again a new scholar in a very large school.

We each have one: mine, so the key tells me, is number 276; but, after depositing within it the "Rules and Standing Order of the House," acquired by me, as by many other assiduous pupils, after their first attendance at the class in parliamentary procedure, which the Post Master General, Mr. Lees Smith, is conducting for the instruction of us novices, I have not the vaguest idea of how to locate it again. So far I have not emulated the new M.P. who did actually get lost and nearly achieved spending the night in what is always elegantly referred to as "another place"—*i.e.* the House of Lords; but there remain passages and staircases which I have not ventured to explore. These passages have a temperature of their own, and a deep stuffiness of a penetrating type. One feels it before one has made one's way up into the central lobby—a great square marble hall, out of which the Chamber itself opens from the cloak room where we each have a named peg: a circular structure, this, above the glorious old crypt, in which M.P.s may marry or have their infants christened in accordance with whatever religious rites they prefer. This crypt is the architectural gem of St. Stephen's, both venerable and beautiful, the brother of the divine Sainte Chapelle in Paris. In it, as in the echoing emptiness of Westminster Hall, the most insensitive must feel something of historic destiny and responsibility.

The sense of material oppression which belongs to every part of St. Stephen's is most acute when you enter the Chamber itself. There you are in the realm of ritual observance. The things that may not be done are numerous. You must not clap your hands in applause, only say "Hear, hear"; you must not give any sign of recognition that the heavy galleries are full of attentive listeners; you must not refer to another member by name: he is always "The Honorable [or "honorable and learned" if a member of the bar, or "honorable and gallant" if of the army; or "right

honorable" if a Privy councillor] member for so-and-so." His name is heard only when for some breach of ritual he is solemnly "named" by the Speaker, in which case he has to leave the Chamber; and, if he refuses, is forcibly removed thence, by the Sergeant-at-Arms, who sits in a little pen, below the bar, close to the entrance and opposite the Speaker. You, anonymous, mere representative of your constituency, make a ceremonial inclination of the head to the chair, as you cross the bar—said bar being no more than a line woven into the covering of the floor and running parallel with the chair; behind it, though you may stand and listen, as many are always to be seen doing, you are technically not within the Chamber. This same reverential inclination of the head is repeated when you pass out, as a sign of deference to the Speaker, the supreme functionary and repository of the powers of the Commons. There he sits in his wig and splendid robes of rich black silk, his fine, silk-stockinged legs (it is highly necessary for the Speaker to "have a leg") terminating in slender feet in shoes with sparkling buckles, crossed in an easy attitude that reveals nothing of the weariness he must feel, as hour after hour passes. Above him is an imposing carven canopy, with a little interior light of its own; a couple of steps below him, at the great table, sit the three Clerks of the House, likewise robed and be-wigged, and knowing more of the rules and procedure of the august assembly which they serve than any of us shall ever learn; they write, interminably, in vast books; the front of the table bears the despatch boxes, at either corner, on which Front Bench speakers place their elbows, some with grace, others not. For Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Snowden, for example, the box seems to stand at precisely the right level; but for Mr. Greenwood it is still too low, and for Mr. Wedgwood Benn, too high. Between these despatch boxes, rows of finely tooled books—I have not yet seen any of them opened.

The first aspect of the whole scene is of something that has gone on forever just so, something fixed in a crystal, part of somebody's dream. This dream-like aspect was strong when, on the first day of our assembling, we, His Majesty's faithful Commons, having duly proposed, seconded, and voted the election of our Speaker, proceeded through the echoing passages to the House of Lords, to communicate to the peers what we had done. There, in a chamber far more ornate and grandiose than ours, we beheld a sparse body of Noble Lords, disposed in semi-recumbent attitudes on sofas upholstered in crimson leather, and apparently paying a vague and aloof attention to a group of quaint-looking figures, mostly in wig and ermine, huddled round the Lord Chancellor. Seated on his wool-sack (which closely resembles a drawing-room pouffe), he seemed to have some sort of hat perched on top of his full-bottom wig. There was a murmur of words, about as intelligible as those heard in the cathedral of some alien land, and, our purpose accomplished, we trooped back to our own House. There the Speaker, now duly elected, endued himself with his robes, took his seat beneath his canopy and, throughout the best part of two entire days, observed members taking the oath. In slow single file we passed before him, after kissing the Book (or reading a form of affirmation) and, one by one, he shook hands with us. That done, we were, at last, really M.P.s; entitled, *inter alia*, to draw our parliamentary salaries at the rate of four hundred pounds per annum. As I passed out, I met Mr. T. P. O'Connor, being wheeled in in his chair. He is the Father of the House; and to my great surprise he told me that the next in succession to that distinguished position is Mr. Lloyd George! There are men who have a longer toll of years' membership, but Mr. Lloyd George's tenure is, as theirs is not, uninterrupted.

These more or less formal transactions over, the next event was "the

gracious speech from the Throne," comprising the Government's program for the ensuing session, which the House, after humbly thanking His Majesty, then proceeds to debate, for sins of commission or omission. Two days, on this, of more or less crowded benches; two days on which the attendance at prayers, with which the proceedings always open, reached record dimensions. To be in for prayers is not, I fear, so much an opportunity of religious edification as part of an effort to secure a good seat. The putting of questions to Ministers—of which notice is given a day or so in advance—is, of course, the one great opportunity of the private member: a good question, followed up by a searching "supplementary," is his method of worrying Ministers, getting information out of them, getting issues ventilated, grievances aired, and attention drawn to himself. It is an opportunity which—so we are told—no other assembly in the world affords in anything like equal measure.

During the hour and a quarter devoted, on four days of the week, to questions, I have never seen the House anything but full. But, that over, there is apt soon to be a sad falling off in the attendance. The general picture is different. Somebody standing up, uttering words, most of which one seems to have heard very often before and to which nobody is paying any particular attention; plenty of room on the green benches, their occupants apparently disposed in comfortable attitudes for a doze; on the front benches (where the Ministers sit) only a couple of figures of waxlike immobility, feet on the despatch boxes in front of them—no other sign of life. This may go on for an hour, two hours. Sooner or later, however, suddenly the lifeless doze breaks up: somebody is on his feet who interests the House; there is bustle, animation, people come crowding in, the assembly is rocking with laughter or surging with strong excitement; and if you are one of the few people who have been sitting there all the time, you will be able to tell the neighbors what it is all about. In almost every room there are tickers which indicate the name of the person speaking, and some of those names will instantly gather the members who are busy answering their interminable correspondence, seeing constituents, attending committees, or chatting in the smoke rooms or on the Terrace, so that within a few seconds it is full to overflowing—so full that there will be rows of men standing behind the bar. For if "something is going on" news of it is conveyed by subtle invisible filaments from those who are listening inside to the others without, and they appear from everywhere and nowhere, to disappear again, just as fast, once the "something" is over—so soon as some M.P. who has the reputation of being a bore has got onto his feet. Then, shamelessly, without the least regard for his feelings or his difficulty in speaking in a moving uproar, they all troop out again.

III

My most definite "impression" about the House is that these invisible and mysterious filaments unite the members and make of them one corporate body, which has a life and an individuality of its own, so that no one House is in the least like any other; but each has a definite physiognomy peculiar to it.

It is not the impression that instantly strikes one, partly because the medium is so very unfamiliar, and partly because one comes to the House straight out of an election. This last is, I am convinced, the real, if not the most flattering reason for the element of disappointment felt by many new M.P.s. They do, in fact, find themselves much smaller than they had thought. They do not, as a rule, put it like that. They talk about the sufferings of their constituents and the pledges they have made to them, and suggest that there is a special glow of moral ardor and fine sincerity in their muddled eagerness to be seen "delivering the goods." But

the real rub is that whereas an election enhances and exaggerates the individual personality of the least self-conscious candidate, the atmosphere of Westminster is extremely inhospitable to the glowing crusader carrying the people's flag. There are too many crusaders, too many flags. Your thrills are reduplicated on every hand; everyone wants to talk, no one to listen. Nor is that all. In the House of Commons things can be done together, or not at all. The technic is throughout co-operative. The man who thinks only of his own point of view, is aware only of his own reactions, gets nowhere. He may make one remarkable speech, and that is an end of him, unless he learns, through this first essay, the rudiments of the new technic that the House opens to the receptive mind.

To see this happening—where it does happen—or not happening, where the metal is too rigid to take a fresh impress, is, in its degree, an intellectual adventure, and one of an absorbing kind—so absorbing, indeed, that there is a real danger lest one's interest be so keenly held by observation that one forgets one is part of the orchestra, not of the audience. For that is, really, what as an M.P. one is. One is involved—actively, if one has the right sort of brains for the job; passively, if not—in an experiment in practical co-operation. This view is not dislodged by any cheap remarks about "talking shop." Talk is all that the House of Commons, as such, can do; but talk is in modern times the most potent instrument of practical action. It is through it that minds communicate, interact, and move; talk is the substitute, and the only possible substitute, for force. Disbelief in talk, contempt for talk—so prevalent nowadays—is neither more nor less than a disbelief in and contempt for all that we mean by civilization. The alternative to talk is fisticuffs. Talk in the House of Commons does not consist merely of set speeches. The molding of opinion, the gradual emergence of a measure of agreement goes on all the time, in committees, in the lobbies, in the smoke room, or on the Terrace, by the rubbing of minds against one another, either in debate or in conversation. It still remains the business of the Government to govern, and of the Opposition to oppose; the co-operation that goes on does not in the least imply any watering down of party loyalty. Quite the contrary. An effective and principled opposition promotes good government; men who know their own minds contribute most effectively to the common pool. Co-operation does not involve the blurring of distinctions of view or any pretense that such do not exist.

From this point of view, I have found it a most interesting study to note the very marked shifting and settling of values that has gone on in my own appreciation of the parliamentary personnel. About the new M.P.s and their shaping, it is far too early to see anything clearly; but, of the old, some strike one very definitely as being "in their element"; others, not. The individuals who seem to me, on my brief experience of observing them in action, as having what I call to myself "orchestral talent," are not very numerous; if there are more of them on the Government side, that, I fancy, is not due merely to the fact that Government speakers have had the larger show this session, but rather to the close connection between this particular power of using speech to co-operative effect and the whole general outlook of the Labor Party. On the Opposition side, the two men who seem to me to have this talent are—rather to my own surprise—Mr. Baldwin, who has it despite the unredeemed commonplace of his enunciation, apprehension, and approach; and Mr. Neville Chamberlain, hampered though he is by a facial expression which suggested Mr. Jack Jones' unparliamentary ejaculation of "Hyena!" Sir Austen, of course, is the most salient imaginable instance of a total lack of any gleam of this co-operative gift of any power of making the House join with

him in what he is saying. Among the Liberals, Sir Herbert Samuel seems to me to have more of it, though in a notably dry and unimaginative form, than Mr. Lloyd George; Mr. Norman Birkett to have a good deal of it, though with a markedly legalistic flavor. On the Government side, the people who have shown most of it, so far, are Mr. Herbert Morrison, Mr. William Graham, Miss Susan Lawrence, and Mr. Alexander. Mr. Snowden has it on occasion; Mr. MacDonald always. Of the younger men, it is Mr. Herbert Morrison who has in my opinion both the marks of a stayer and more of the orchestral, co-operative faculty than either Mr. Hugh Dalton or Sir Oswald Mosley, together with a touch of fire so far lacking in the massive intellectual equipment of Mr. William Graham. Those who are on the lookout to discern Mr. MacDonald's successor should keep their eye on the Minister of Transport, and not forget his remarkable record, both administrative, as leader of the Labor Party in the London County Council, and political, as creator of the London Labor Party and author of the complete smash of Communism in the metropolis.

As for the Prime Minister himself, until one has seen him in action in the House of Commons, it is impossible to measure him accurately. It is here, evidently, that he is in his element. His personality, strong as it is, has not the "bite" of Philip Snowden's; he does not immediately strike one as having Mr. Lloyd George's easy mastery of tactics; he does not handle figures with the virtuosity of Mr. Graham or phrases with the power of Lord Hugh Cecil. But no one of them "counts" as he does. He counts even when he is silent; you know by something that has happened to the atmosphere that he is on the bench without looking to see. This is not a function of premiership: Mr. Baldwin never possessed it. In part, it is a product of the uncanny celerity of apprehension by which he feels what is going on in the corporate mind of the House. There is no electric filament there that does not vibrate through him. The group-mind is his instrument; he is a born orchestral conductor.

Against these instances of men in their element may be set two cases of brilliant soloists, who, though they hold the House, do not influence it—Mr. Winston Churchill and Mr. James Maxton. The Chamber will fill up to hear them, it will stay full to enjoy them; but, when either of them has sat down it reverts to where it was before. Neither of them seems to me, in the full sense, to "join on." They remain "star turns": Mr. Maxton, with his incredibly picturesque appearance and his lovely voice, a pathetic turn; Mr. Churchill, with his great gifts of dialectic and of buffoonery, a savagely comic turn.

IV

For what it is worth, then—and no one knows better than I how little, intrinsically, an impression based on five months' membership and a session of only five weeks can be worth—my main impression of the House of Commons is that it is a field of corporate adventure of a unique kind. Here, more fully than anywhere else, an effort is going on, continually, if slowly, to apply the technic of co-operation to the business of government: that is why it must be slow; that is the justification for the complex and muffling procedure against which the new member feels himself beating as against walls of glass.

Whether, to this adventure, women, as such, have anything specific to contribute, I do not know. The individual contributions of Margaret Bondfield and Susan Lawrence require no pointing out. The presence of women in the House must, *ipso facto*, make it more truly representative and must, so, help to make more near the correspondence between its mind and the mind of the nation. For that, there are still far too few of us. We are, however, at least numerous enough to be entirely taken

for granted. If there be a "romance of politics" its leading notes are intellectual, not emotional. They are analogous to that high exhilaration which may visit the artist, the scientist, or the craftsman in any material who is trying to do his job as well as it can be done, to understand his material, and bend it to some resemblance to his vision.

And if, so far, I have seemed ungrateful in my description of the material aspect of existence in St. Stephen's, let me redress the balance by recalling two moments, belonging to that category, which are very good indeed.

One of them comes when, at half past eleven at night—provided the rule which ordains that to be our hour for rising has not been suspended—minions who seem to have been selected for their solemn dignity of port and sonorous bell-like voices, sing out, in a rich ringing baritone, "Who Goes Home?" More in that call than a mere intimation of release; in the sound, as it reverberates along passages and up in the vaulted roof, is something to stir the sense of belonging to a great and ancient institution. Then, even more than when one hears Black Rod knocking at the door of the Chamber to bring us a message from the peers, or sees the Controller of His Majesty's Household, in the splendor of gold lace, arching feather plumes, and white staff of office, bow once, and again, to the Chair before delivering the Royal message of thanks to the faithful Commons, does one realize that one sits where Pym and Hampden and Cromwell once sat, and is the inheritor and guardian of privileges and duties won by their struggle and sacrifice and sweat of brow and soul.

The other comes when, out of the heat and fray of nerves of the House, one emerges on to the Terrace for a whiff of air. Here and there, on a bench, are dusky forms; up and down, ghostly figures patrol; but one does not notice them, for, over the river, the moon is risen high, and its silver light is crossed by golden reflections from the trams, lovely as gondolas as they pass and repass over Westminster Bridge, and by the orange bars cast by the lamps on the dark, faintly ruffled surface of the flowing water.

THE CADETS OF NEW MARKET

A REMINDER TO THE CRITICS OF THE SOUTH

BY GERALD W. JOHNSON

"I WAS born," said O. Henry, "in a somnolent little Southern town . . ."

This statement is almost unique, because in it William Sydney Porter wasted no less than two words—a record for him. He was born in 1867, therefore "Southern" was the only adjective he needed; for in 1867 Southern towns were all little and all somnolent.

The town to which O. Henry referred is Greensboro, North Carolina, and it was still little and still somnolent when he left it, about the time its population was increased by the birth of the child who was to be his successor in the favor of the story-reading public; for Wilbur Daniel Steele also first saw the light in the same village.

But neither man wrote anything memorable in Greensboro. Steele was taken away by his parents when he was still a child; and in O. Henry's time Greensboro had no more use for a short-story writer than a hog has for a hip pocket. Will Porter was a drug clerk and a drug clerk he remained until he went, first to Texas, then to jail, and finally to New York, where he became famous.

His most vivid memory of his birthplace, thirty years after he had left it, was of summer evenings spent on somebody's front porch with a crowd of boys and girls. Someone always had a guitar, and the group sang old ballads behind a lattice heavy with honeysuckle. So it happened that the name of the town was always associated in O. Henry's mind with soft summer nights whose air was drenched with the scent of honeysuckle and disturbed by no noise harsher than young voices singing "Ben Bolt" or the "Spanish Cavalier" to the twanging of a guitar.

The charm of this picture is due, of course, to the haze of memory; for in the years between, say, 1870 and 1900 Greensboro was desperately poor as well as small and quiet. The struggle for a bare existence was so stern that its citizens had no time to hearken to a spinner of yarns, even though he were gifted with the magic of an O. Henry. So he had to go away to obtain a hearing.

To-day this same town still calls its principal business thoroughfare Elm Street, although there has been no elm there for a generation; but that is almost the only feature of the place that fits O. Henry's description. There are half a dozen skyscrapers on Elm Street. There are traffic bells that jangle, and trolley cars whose wheels screech on curves. There are policemen's whistles, and thousands and thousands of automobile horns. There is, in short, the same devilish uproar that characterizes every lively American town. Somnolence is no more possible there than it is in the interior of a boiler factory.

Universal poverty has disappeared along with tranquillity. There are now a platoon of millionaires and a battalion of bootleggers in the town's sixty thousand population. The largest denim mill in the world and half a dozen giant insurance companies testify to the vigor

and acumen of the business men; and a garland of colleges, two of them excellent schools for negroes, does credit to the intellectual activity of the place.

This transformation has occurred since the turn of the century. It is merely a sample of what has taken place all over the South since the year 1900. It is the work of the new generation, whose youth was not poisoned by the aftermath of the Civil War. Within these latter years North Carolina cotton mills have acquired more spindles than those of Massachusetts. Southern tobacco has produced a group of millionaires with fortunes great enough to impress even Wall Street. Birmingham has become a gigantic steel manufacturing city. Norfolk threatens to dominate the shipbuilding industry. New Orleans claims the rank of the second greatest American port.

Nor is the new activity below the Potomac wholly, or most impressively, industrial. Broadway has blossomed with the names of Southerners, picked out in electric lights—DuBose Heyward, Laurence Stallings, Paul Green, others. Pulitzer prizes for writing folk stream South—to Green, to Julia Peterkin, to Robert Lathan, Julian Harris, Grover Hall, Louis Jaffé, Lamar Stringfield. A South Carolinian takes the Prix de Rome in sculpture. With Heyward, Mrs. Peterkin, and James Boyd at work in the Carolinas, Ellen Glasgow no longer represents the farthest south of the fine novel. Poets, as distinguished from poetasters, pop up like crocuses in the spring; Addison Hibbard compiles an anthology including thirty who have published each a volume of verse which is better than respectable. The Universities of Virginia and North Carolina publish in the *Virginia Quarterly Review* and *Social Forces* a literary quarterly and a learned journal which are viewed respectfully throughout the country.

Small wonder, then, that the world has decided the South at last is waking up, and is inclined to give young Southerners enormous credit for having shaken off the intellectual and moral drowsiness that afflicted their fathers.

The South has its glamorous traditions, to be sure, but they come down only as far as 1865. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Marshall, James Madison were giants, as everyone admits; and the South in their day dominated the nation. Andrew Jackson, John C. Calhoun, and Henry Clay were no weaklings, either; such men do not spring from a degenerate race. In moral stature and military genius Robert E. Lee overtops George Washington himself, although Lee had not the statesmanship that secures Washington his primacy. And Stonewall Jackson, the two Johnstons, Longstreet, Beauregard, Stuart, Early, and Forrest were such soldiers as delight the heart of the romancer and flutter the maiden pride of any nation. Tardy justice now begins to admit that Jefferson Davis and Alexander Stephens also were men of genius.

Who was the next Southerner to fire the imagination of the nation in a way comparable to the least of these? Woodrow Wilson—but you have leaped a generation to come to him. Furthermore, his notable work was done outside of the South. What happened to the Southern boys just a little older than Wilson, who remained in the South? Were they really unworthy of the tradition of the South, incapable of greatness?

At New Market, in the Valley of Virginia, when the Confederates were hard pressed on one occasion they threw into the line of battle the cadets from the Virginia Military Institute. They were largely striplings of sixteen or so, too small to handle a heavy army rifle except by straining, far too young to have anything to do with the business of organized butchery. As they marched into battle the band of a veteran regiment played "Rock-a-by Baby." But they held their position and actually captured a Federal battery. When the fight was over they buried their dead, gathered up

their wounded, and the heroic, pitiful survivors marched back to their schoolbooks. What became of the New Market cadets after the war?

Theirs is the lost generation of the South. Remarque has lately won the applause of the world with his eloquent threnody of the generation that Europe lost in the war of 1914–18; but no man has had a good word for the generation represented by the New Market cadets. It was during their maturity that the South lay as in a coma. Economically, intellectually, morally, Dixie, as the world believes, drowsed those years away; and now that the sons of that generation are bestirring themselves enough to make a noise in the world, men congratulate the South on the passing of the Rip Van Winkles—Walter H. Page called them Mummies. Of this generation the consensus of mankind seems to be that nothing in its life was so becoming as the quitting of it.

There is no arguing away a popular superstition, and it is much too late to attempt to retrieve the reputation of this generation if it were possible. The men and women who composed it are already in the graveyard, or so nearly there that another injustice, more or less, affects them but little. The world will doubtless go on believing that the new activity in the South, intellectual and industrial, was generated in a vacuum and that the young Southerners who are now commanding the admiration of the nation sprang from the head of Jove, or anywhere rather than from the loins of their putative forebears. Can the intellectually dead generate intelligence? Can mummies give birth to living offspring? Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?

But while this theory may be well enough for outsiders, to credit it would be shameful in a Southerner of the twentieth century. We cannot forget the pit whence we were digged, nor the crushing toil that went into the digging. What went on in the South between 1870 and 1900 was too completely tragic to furnish material for theatrical tragedy, far too high in spirit for written romance which crawls along the beaten paths of life, too stark for poetry. The New Market cadets went back to their schoolbooks for a little while after the battle; but a few years later they were flung into the line again, and this time they were never relieved, for the battle never ended. They went home from school to find the old civilization wrecked; and they spent the rest of their lives fighting hand to hand with intangible foes far more ruthless and far more dangerous than Federal infantrymen.

It is all but impossible now to present an adequate picture of the odds these men faced. The material destruction in the Southern states is relatively easy to compute. Most of us are under the impression that the United States fought quite a war ten years ago; but to survivors of the Confederacy it was a mere skirmish. The war ten years ago cost the country something like an eighth of its total wealth, and called into military service about one-sixth of the men of military age, that is, 4,000,000 out of 23,000,000 available. Suppose the war had taken all the money and all the men? Suppose we had put into the field 25,000,000 men? At that, we should have failed to equal the record of the Confederate State of North Carolina, which supplied 120,000 soldiers to the Confederacy when the State had only 105,000 voters, including all those too old and too infirm for military service.

This part of the situation can be put into figures. We are also able to construct a statistical representation of the damage caused by a policy of reconstruction of which one is at a loss to say whether its stupidity or its viciousness was the more conspicuous. For instance, this same State of North Carolina, already so completely bankrupt that Serbia, in 1919, was by comparison in a flourishing condition, was loaded with an additional debt of $32,000,000,

nearly all of which was stolen outright by officials put in power, not by the votes of the people, but by the bayonets of the Federal army of occupation. Much the same sort of thing happened to all the other conquered States.

All this, also, can be represented to a certain extent to the modern world. What cannot be represented is not the outward difficulties under which this Southern generation labored, but its own inadequacy to the task which it had to perform. One can imagine the bombardment to which the cadets were subjected at New Market. One can find out the number of troops flung against them. One might calculate the intensity of the rifle-fire along their front. But there is still a factor in the equation not taken into account, and it is the most important factor of all. That is the weakness of the cadets themselves, due to their youth. Everyone who has been a soldier knows how a grown man's arms ache, how his shoulders turn to water, how his back bends and his head droops after he has handled a heavy army rifle in rapid fire for even a short while; but who can imagine the fatigue of a small boy subjected to the same inhuman strain for hour after hour? The sheer weariness of that child-regiment makes the heart ache, even after seventy years.

II

But the generation which had to fight its way out of the chaos that followed the Civil War in the South was hardly better prepared for the task than were the cadets for theirs. The great crime of the Old South was its neglect to exercise a larger measure of intelligence in its economic organization. The fact that it was involuntary, that it involved no malevolence, has no relation to the magnitude of the offense. The really great crimes are nearly always committed by stupid people rather than by bad people.

When the old order was overthrown by the Civil War, the rising generation found itself without either the equipment or the training to establish a new order in conformity with the altered environment. The lack of equipment was a handicap, but the lack of training was a well-nigh fatal handicap. France, after 1870, and Germany, after 1918, proved that lack of equipment cannot long keep a nation submerged if it has been bred to commerce and industrialism. But the economic system of the Old South was already falling into ruin before the war struck it; the war itself might be described as the last desperate expedient of a people exasperated beyond endurance by its own inability to devise any better economic order than a one-crop system and slave labor. But it was a suicidal expedient, for no such moribund system could possibly stand the strain of war. As a matter of historic fact, it collapsed so completely that not even the amazing military genius exhibited by Southern commanders could stave off ruin. The world is still unable to comprehend, not their defeat, but how they managed to last so long.

And there was no resilience in it, no rebound after the war. It was the deadest system ever killed by a disastrous campaign.

So the New Market cadets and all their generation were faced with a worse than Israelites' task. Not only were they required to make bricks without straw, but also without any adequate knowledge of how bricks are made even with straw. The old system was demolished, and, far from being trained in another, they were hardly aware of the existence of any other. Yet they were required to build a new civilization.

And in forty years they had built it. It is no Periclean Athens, or Augustan Rome, but it serves to produce scholars and artists. It begins to bring forth romancers, scientists, poets, playwrights, philosophers. It begins to excite the admiration of its contemporaries, who say that at last the South is undergoing an intellectual and moral regeneration.

But those of us whose memories are long enough to reach back twenty years have a different point of view. These members of the new generation are very fine fellows, but they did not draw their vigor, their stamina, their intellectual power out of the air. They got it from the hard-bitten old boys who sired them; and for my part, I cherish serious doubts that, with all their admitted brilliance, they are quite the men their fathers were. That is to say, if they were suddenly stripped, not merely of all they possess, but of all their traditions, all their habits of thought, all their manner of living, and compelled to build anew and in a different order of societal architecture, I doubt that they would build in forty years as high a civilization as the Southern States enjoyed in 1900.

As I write I recall the achievement of a certain Southerner who shall be nameless here for reasons which will presently appear. He was a schoolman. He was shockingly ill-educated, judged by modern standards and, to adopt the phrase of John Kendrick Bangs, if his mind had been a slot you couldn't have inserted a nickel in it. He was fat, oleaginous, and tawdry. He was never addicted to pineapple, or any other sort of rum, but otherwise he was a replica of the Reverend Anthony Humm encountered by the elder Mr. Weller at the Brick Lane Branch of the United Grand Junction Ebenezer Temperance Association. And his school was like him. In the light of 1929 it seems to have been everything connoted by the Southern word "tacky." It was a starveling institution in which famished professors half-educated gawky country girls. It was enormously long on piety, and short on good manners and good sense.

Nevertheless, this squat, dull, semi-illiterate almost single-handed pounded into the head of a bankrupt, starving, and distracted State the notion that it must educate its women at any cost. To this accomplishment he gave his whole life. For it he planned, he spoke, he intrigued, he toiled like a convict in a chain gang. To secure his scanty appropriations from the Legislature he had to resort to every known political device, from eloquence to blackmail. Again and again when the cause seemed lost he wept openly and unashamed on the floor of the House. He was laughed at, reviled, slandered, and kicked, but he stuck to it, and before he died, in his early fifties, he had committed the commonwealth to the principle of unlimited educational opportunity for every girl.

With a little less intensity, with a little more easeful living, he might have lasted another twenty or thirty years; but it is my profound conviction that he would have regarded the shortening of his own life by twenty years a small price to pay for the success of his idea.

But in this is no pettiness. Here is no smallness of soul, no cheapness, "nothing but good and fair." What, then, is the true measure of this man—the oddities, provincialisms, asininities so conspicuous in the eyes of outsiders? They are attributable, largely if not entirely, to the accidents of his environment. What education he had he scrambled for in the chaotic days immediately following the Civil War; no wonder it was a thing of shreds and patches. His experience of the world was that of a man desperately put to it to find enough to eat; no wonder it was narrow and acidulous. But the keen vision with which he pierced the future and saw the future need, and the intense, terrific devotion which made him pour his whole life into one purpose—these were no accidents. Perhaps he was a fool. Perhaps any martyr is a fool. In any case, he was worth more to his State than five gross of assorted cotton mill barons, plus three dozen Grade A poets, novelists, and dramatists, and a million run-of-the-mine statesmen. His State to-day spawns shoals of pedagogues who are better educated, handsomer, and far more gentlemanly fellows; but if it can find among them just one

who is half as much of a man as was this pot-bellied little ignoramus, then well indeed may it thank God and take courage.

I have seen a farmer come in, dripping with sweat, from the fodder-field. He wore half a shirt, trousers tattered from the knee down, broken shoes without socks, and the ruin of a hat. He plunged his head into a basin of water, splashed vigorously for a moment, and then, looking at me quizzically over the towel as he dried his hands, recited in tones too mellifluous for sincerity, "*O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint, agricolas!*"

In 1859 they taught the classics thoroughly at the University of North Carolina, and as a freshman there he had learned his Georgics by heart: but before he could obtain a degree the curse fell upon the land, and he rode away from the campus to follow J. E. B. Stuart, instead of Virgil. "My heart was with the Oxford men who went abroad to die" reflects pretty faithfully the attitude of all England; but who ever gave a damn for the Carolina men who did the same thing? The Oxford men won, and the Carolina men lost, which makes all the difference. This man, for instance, when the fighting was over, came home to find the University looted and closed, and women and children of his own blood starving. He fed them by the labor of his hands; and in the sweat of his face did he and they eat bread for the rest of his life.

> God rest you, happy gentlemen,
> Who aid your good lives down;
> Who took the khaki and the gun
> Instead of cap and gown—
> God bring you to a fairer place
> Than even Oxford town!

It brings tears to the eyes of Englishmen, but all it gives North Carolinians is a horse-laugh. "A fairer place than even Oxford town"—to wit, a fodder-field, where back-breaking labor is performed in a temperature of 115 degrees. "O too happy husbandmen, if only they knew their good fortune"—do you wonder at the sarcasm in his voice? The marvel is not that he was sarcastic, but that he was gaily sarcastic. The man was designed by nature to wear the academician's robe. He was meant to be a citizen of the gentle and fair republic of letters, where he might have won renown; but the fortune of war made him a field-hand, and he could smile ironically over the ruin of his own aspirations. And to do this, surely, one must be a manful man.

I knew a doctor of brilliant attainments who died in the gutter, died like a dog. Liquor, said the neighbors, dolefully shaking their heads. But nobody ever thought to seek for any reason other than original sin for his drinking too much. He had come out of the Confederate army still a stripling, and how he contrived to get his medical education God only knows. But for forty years he carried on a practice so immense and so widely scattered that it would drive three modern medicos into nervous prostration in six months. The horses the man drove to death would have remounted a regiment of cavalry; and in the vast, poverty-smitten region over which he ranged, not one patient in five could ever pay him a cent. He could hardly buy a decent coat, not to mention expensive surgical equipment; yet I doubt that he slept a single night through for half a lifetime. Through sleet and snow on many a bitter night alcohol carried him through when he must otherwise have failed some suffering pauper in the remote wilderness. Alcohol got him at last. It was foolish of him to rely on it, of course. He should have guarded his own health and let the poor devils die in the backwoods. Then he might have had time to study, and to become famous in his own profession. Yet I am inconsistent enough to believe that the old doctor, drunk, was a more valuable citizen than is the soberest prohibition enforcement agent ever heard of.

I knew an editor whose paper, judged by every standard of modern journalism,

was a lousy one, but who was, nevertheless, a great journalist—greater, I almost suspect, than the Lathams, the Harrises, the Jaffés, and the Halls, although these have won Pulitzer prizes, and the old fellow was hardly heard of across his own State line. He lacked the brilliance of a Watterson, and the technical training, as well as the mechanical equipment, which fortifies modern Southern newspapers. But in the late eighties and early nineties, when the South touched its nadir, when passion was most venomous and obscurantism loudest, this man was truthful and fair. Financially, socially, and politically, it was a disastrous policy; for truth and fairness in journalism, so far from being in demand, were regarded as damnable heresy; political office, prestige, and such money as was available were all reserved for the kept press. Yet, against every conceivable outside obstacle, and against the more formidable inner handicaps of poor education and narrow experience, he maintained his standard of decency and intelligence so well that his spirit slowly infected the press of his State and hauled it up from barbarism. He made no stir in the outside world, but he was decent when it was harder to be decent than it is now to be great. Yet he was of the generation which we are accustomed to regard as intellectually and morally sterile.

Even the textile industry, which now threatens conversion of the South into a region of brassy, loud, and curiously brutal go-getters, had, in its early days, its magnificent men. In the beginning many a man toiled at the business with no real liking for it, and not much hope of financial profit, because the creation of industry promised to drag his native land from the morass. These, indeed, had their reward, since climate, proximity to the raw material, and an almost limitless supply of pauper labor combined to make cotton manufacturing vastly profitable. None the less, the first venturers into this field were far-seeing, bold and vigorous—certainly no slothful generation.

Any Southerner thirty-five years of age or over can remember, if he will turn his mind to the past, such feats of valor, endurance, and resourcefulness as amaze him in retrospect. Money, of course, is a highly deceptive standard of value; probably most Americans would find it difficult to live on the sums which represented their fathers' total earnings. But in the South the disparity between this generation and its predecessor is greater than elsewhere. A dollar was bigger thirty years ago than it is now; but even then a man who supported and educated half a dozen children on a salary of seventy-five dollars a month was a financial wizard who need not stand abashed in the presence of Henry Ford or Andrew Mellon. Yet the South was full of them.

Nevertheless, the impression persists that this was a lethargic, drowsy, dull generation. The truth is, of course, that only those who were vibrantly alive, incredibly keen, superlatively wide-awake survived. The others went to Texas. In the South from the seventies to the end of the century one dared not go to sleep, on penalty of his life. Perhaps he might not actually be carried to the graveyard, but he found himself promptly a charge on the charity of his neighbors, and his children definitely went under—the boys usually departing for the West, and the girls winding up in the cotton-mill.

Art did not flourish, it is true, but when did art ever flourish on the frontier? The South after the Civil War was to all intents and purposes a frontier, except for the fact that its fields had been cleared. But this was an advantage more than compensated by the fact that if the fields had been cleared, they had also been sterilized by a ruinous cropping system. For the rest, the old order had been completely wrecked, and the inhabitants were compelled to build anew. Since their training, such as it was, had all been designed for the old order, they were compelled to proceed by the slow and expensive method of trial and error.

They were surrounded by an economic and moral wilderness, much more difficult to subdue than the physical wilderness their forebears had entered.

In such circumstances, mere living is a triumph, and art would be a miracle. The Muses, indeed, are and have always been kept women. Artists may be poor, but art is for the rich, and it flourishes only in rich countries. A nation, like a man, may be crass, as well as rich and, therefore, devoid of art; but art cannot survive except where the country is rich enough to maintain a certain number of dreamers. In the years immediately following the Civil War to dream, in the South, was death. Every able-bodied man was desperately needed for the task of rebuilding material civilization, and he who abandoned that task, even if he survived physically, suffered the moral death of betraying his people. The least he could do was to take himself away, to do his dreaming in some region where the surplus was sufficient to enable some men to refrain from materially productive labor without inflicting appreciable injury upon society.

Perhaps the most tragic figures in the South are the men who might have been artists had not their obvious duty compelled them to throttle their dreams and turn their hands to material labor. Every Southerner knows them—wistful figures, a little apart from their fellows, even in old age, dimly aware that they have somehow lost, but not sure what, or why, or when. In his latest novel DuBose Heyward sketched one of them lightly; it is a pity he did not do a full-length study, for they are worthy of justification.

But the necessity for that sort of sacrifice is passing, if it has not altogether passed. Heyward himself, with nothing to offer the world but poems and plays and stories, not only survives in Charleston but is acclaimed as a great man there. Julia Peterkin was born late enough to be able, after long years devoted to the affairs of her house, to lay aside the broom and pick up the pen; and the State of South Carolina recognizes her as one of its ornaments. William Alexander Percy can sing in Mississippi, and John Crowe Ransom in Tennessee. Paul Green and James Boyd are honored in North Carolina. Indeed, the most ill-rewarded of all the arts begins to raise its head in Dixie; Lamar Stringfield, a Tar Heel composer, won the Pulitzer prize in 1928 for an orchestral suite based on folk music of the North Carolina mountaineers, and last summer he conducted a symphony orchestra in his home town, Asheville.

In all this Southerners can take legitimate pride. In so far as the individual artists are concerned, it is in every respect creditable. But I submit that as regards the whole generation which rules the South at this moment, it proves only the existence of money below the Potomac. That is to say, it substantiates what the existence of the cotton mills, the hydroelectric lines, the steel plants, the furniture and tobacco factories had first asserted, namely, that the material losses of the Civil War have been made good. The South now has leisure, therefore it can give some attention to other things than the struggle for existence.

III

But who gave it the money, and so the leisure to appreciate and encourage art? Who but the lost generation, which had no time to search after learning, or abstract beauty, or anything but the bare necessities of life? Who but the Rip Van Winkles, the Mummies, regarded by the world as having drowsed their lives away?

A life may be hard and bare and bitter without necessarily being degraded. Indeed, it is rare that true degradation sets in until some degree of softness, of fatness, has been attained. Consider the worst offenses charged against the generation in the South that has just passed, and compare them with the corresponding charges brought against the present generation. There was a Ku Klux

Klan in the South immediately after the Civil War. But it was no preposterous group of addlepates striving to give themselves dignity by mysterious trappings. It was an organization of desperate men committed to desperate deeds. When the old Ku Klux Klan donned its robes and sallied out, it was not for child's play. Before it returned it was more than likely that somebody had died—far more often than is generally realized, one or more of the Klansmen. Harried by private detectives, Secret Service agents, organized bands of negroes, and the United States Army, the member of the old Klan rode with death on his crupper. How does that compare with the Klan which the modern generation has produced?

Far worse than the Klan, the older generation evolved tolerance of Judge Lynch. For this there are many reasons, but no adequate excuse, so let the reasons go. The modern generation has to its credit the reduction of lynchings from 255 in 1892 to 16 in 1927. But if we are to believe Walter White, who has made a meticulous investigation of the subject, as the lynchings have decreased in number, they have increased in bestiality. The older generation hanged or shot its victims; it remained for the younger to invent and apply tortures that might appall a Chinese executioner. In the olden time there was no suspicion that there existed in the South a race of connoisseurs of lynchings—men who would race across country a hundred miles to attend an event of the kind, to offer their expert aid in dispatching the victim with the utmost possible cruelty.

The older generation, as most frontiersmen have done, developed a religious faith as hard, as gnarled and knotty, as were their own lives. Puritanism flourished then in its sternest and stiffest form. But Puritanism in Jonathan Edwards' day had dignity, at least. The Puritanism of the South's lost generation had dignity, and more. It was a bleak faith, if you please, but it was a powerful faith, with which nobody trifled. Its priests were frequently austere men, and not seldom terrible men, but they believed themselves to be servants of the Most High God. Nobody suspected them of selling their religion to cotton mill owners as a convenient narcotic with which to keep the wage-slaves quiescent. Nobody found them denouncing the carnalities of the poor white trash and discreetly glozing over the faults of the rich and influential. They did not convert their pulpits into sounding-boards of partisan politics. Their bishops did not invade Wall Street. They may have served God in ways sometimes not to His liking, but they served Mammon in no way whatsoever.

The South remains perhaps the most religious section of the country, but it finds it more and more necessary to rely on the strong arm of the police to sustain the faith. Comment is unnecessary.

The South may be waking up, as the optimists assert; but it might be plausibly argued that the reverse is the truth —that it is just now beginning to drowse, because only now has it dared sleep. At any rate, as it develops the graces of a rich civilization, it begins to develop the vices also; and it should take heed to these things before it congratulates itself on having produced a finer generation than those who, as children, fought at New Market, and, as men, cleared the way to greatness for their sons.

The Lion's Mouth

WHAT SHOULD CHILDREN TELL PARENTS?

BY E. B. WHITE

SO MANY children have come to me and said, "What shall I tell my parents about sex?" My answer is always the same, "Tell them the truth." If the subject is approached in a tactful way, it should be no more embarrassing to teach a parent about sex than to teach him about personal pronouns. And it should be less discouraging.

I have talked with hundreds of children about the problem of educating their parents along sex lines. So many of them have told me that they honestly tried to give their elders the benefit of their experience in life, but that the parents usually grew flushed and red and would reply, "Nice people don't talk about such things." It is true that a great gap exists between generations. The fact that children are embarrassed to have their parents along when they are attending certain movies or plays is indicative of how hard it is to overcome the old fear of allowing one's elders to learn anything. A child never knows at what point in a play his uninformed old father will start to giggle. It is hard for children to break through and really come in touch with their elders. "Nice people don't talk about such things!" is the defense which old people put up against life itself when they feel it crowding in all around their heads.

Parents hesitate to discuss things calmly and intelligently with their children for two reasons: first, they have a kind of dread of learning something they don't want to know, and second, they feel that if they must learn anything at all they should like to be spared the humiliation of learning it from their own offspring. Actually, middle age (and even senescence) is marked by a great curiosity about life. There is a feeling that life is slipping away quickly, and that it would be terrible to have the end come before everything in life has been revealed. The beauty of life, always apparent, implies a mystery which is disturbing right up to the bitter end. The spectacle of old men wistfully attending sex lectures (as they frequently do) suggests that the strong suspicion exists in them that somewhere they will hear the magic word by which human affairs will become clarified, somewhere they will glimpse the ultimate ecstasy. Children who allow their fathers and mothers, to whom they owe their very existence, to go on wondering about sex are derelicts to duty.

If young folks lack the tact or intelligence requisite to enlighten their parents the task should be entrusted to someone else. Yet it is hard to say to whom. A child should think twice before sending his father around to the public school to secure sex information from his teacher. Women teachers, to borrow a phrase, are apt to be "emotionally illiterate." Many teachers have had no sex life and are just waiting for somebody like your father to show up.

It is of the utmost importance in imparting facts to one's parents that it be done in such a way as not to engender fear or anxiety. The phraseology should

be chosen carefully, and efforts should be made to explain everything clearly but without the use of words which have a tendency to make old people nervous. The word "erotic" is such a word. When it is necessary to speak of Man's erotic tendencies, it is best to substitute another word. In the first place, an overwhelming majority of parents do not know the exact meaning of the word "erotic," and to know an *in*exact meaning is worse than nothing. Many are apt to confuse it vaguely with "exotic." I have known parents to go through whole books by authors like Havelock Ellis without understanding a single paragraph because they thought Man's "eroticism" referred to his desire to be in some foreign place like Spain. Those parents that actually do detect the difference between the sound of the words will immediately become nervous, inattentive, and dispirited. They will make some excuse to leave the room and will wander out, probably to the ice-box to get themselves a cold snack, which they will eat while in a sulky frame of mind. Later they will look up the word in the dictionary but will forget it by the time they hear it again in conversation or read it in print.

Just what to tell parents is, of course, a vital question, not to be answered dogmatically. Before a child can conscientiously approach such subjects as pedestalism, the recessive knee, Begonia-ism, frigidity in men, birth control, sublimation, and the swastika fixation, he must clear the boards. The simple phases of sex should be imparted in a direct manner: it is best to explain things in a matter-of-fact way, rather than resort to such cloudy analogies as birds and flowers.

Strange to say, the habits of birds and flowers have done as little to clarify the human scene as almost any other two manifestations in nature. Further, there is always the danger, in setting up plant or animal life as an example, that one's parents will place a literal interpretation on things.

I am thinking particularly of the case —which all sociological students know about—of Nina Sembrich, the fifteen-year-old high-school girl who attempted to impart knowledge to her father by telling him about bees. (Nina's mother was dead or she would have told her too.) She traced, in rather minute detail, the renascence of earth in spring, the blossoming of the trees, the activity of the bees and their function in distributing the pollen, the fertilization of the seed and its growth during the warm languorous summer days, finally the fruition and harvest.

It was a beautiful story, redolent of orchards and sunny hillsides, instinct with life—a story that had a soporific effect on Mr. Sembrich, lulling him as the buzz of a bee lulls one in hot daisy fields. The upshot of it was that he somehow got the idea that to have babies you had to keep bees.

He bought several hives, installing them in the little sitting room on the second floor, where Mrs. Sembrich had kept her sewing machine when she was alive. The acquisition of the apiary further complicated matters for Mr. Sembrich by reason of the fact that bees themselves enjoy a rather extraordinary sexual scheme. Observed by a slightly nervous person who is trying to profit by a simple analogy—as Mr. Sembrich was—bees are capable of causing the utmost confusion.

If you will recall what you know about bees, you will readily understand what I mean. In a colony of bees certain individuals have no sex whatsoever; these are the "workers." The male bees are "drones." The queen (or "mother") bee develops her sexual character only after being arbitrarily chosen for the purpose, walled up, and fattened on special food.

Mr. Sembrich marveled at these things.

Basing his hopes entirely on what he had seen, he made his first overt act, which was to give up his business, on the assumption that to be endowed with

masculine characteristics one had to be a drone. In this, of course, he was justified to some degree; for it is quite true that very busy men rarely are fully equipped for a complete or happy sex life.

Business men commonly find a vicarious gratification for their erotic nature in card index systems. Often, their satiable appetite for life is dissipated in the process of dictating a single sales letter. Only men who devote virtually their entire attention to love ever glimpse its full glory or experience its bewildering intensity. (And they make so little money they might just as well not.)

Mr. Sembrich, therefore, was not without justification in becoming a drone, since life was what he wanted to find out about. But it was when he undertook to fatten up a lady of his acquaintance into a "mother" that he ran into difficulties.

He locked her in the kitchen and plied her with rich desserts. He even urged honey on her—a rather literal expedient even for a man in his mental condition. The lady not only failed to become a mother, but she took sick and died, surrounded by a group of Mr. Sembrich's "workers" whom he had hired to help feed her. With a dead woman in the kitchen and a lot of bees upstairs in the sitting room, the household became unbearable as a place to live in, so Mr. Sembrich fled, still ignorant of the essential knowledge of life.

Another case, not exactly paralleling the Sembrich affair, is the case of two parents who failed to learn something to their advantage because they happened to be at dinner. It happened this way. Charles Updegraff had sent his son, Junior, to spend the summer at a boys' camp.

Now, at Camp Whortleberry (that was the name of the camp) the authorities had adopted what is known as the "pet method" for imparting sex knowledge to the boys. Each boy was given charge of a pet of some kind, and the pets were given *carte blanche*. Junior Updegraff drew a pair of sunfish. To augment the actual pet study, the boys were also given a series of lectures by the camp director, who knew in a general way what he was talking about.

Thus, when the summer was over the boys' minds were full of a strange assortment of facts and oddments, some of them rather amusing. Young Junior had hardly been home an hour when he thought he would do his old man a good turn by telling him what he knew about sunfish. The Updegraffs were at table.

"Pop," he said, "do you want the low-down on a sunfish?"

Mrs. Updegraff hastily interrupted. "Better wait till after dinner, son," she said.

"What's the matter with right now?" asked Junior. "I was just going to tell Pop about our pet study course. I know a lot of things."

"Wait till we're through eating," said Mrs. Updegraff.

"Why should I? A mouse is an embryo twenty days, a lopsided apple is that way because it's been fertilized only on one side, male animals grow bright colored in the mating season, and so it goes. Sunfish . . ."

"Junior!" said Mrs. Updegraff, sharply. "Not till after dinner. Sunfish can wait!"

"No they can't!" cried Junior, warming up to his subject. "The father sunfish makes the nest, then . . ."

"We don't want to hear about it," snapped Junior's mother. "Tell us about your canoe trips."

"I never went on no canoe trips."

"Why not?"

"Always was watching the sunfish."

The matter was dropped, and the meal continued in silence. After dinner Mr. Updegraff, secretly very much interested, hung around in the hope that his son would again open up the subject of sunfish. The boy never did. He was only a child, and children are easily discouraged.

THE GARDEN OF ALIBI

BY SARAH FLETCHER MILLIGAN

WHEN Sir Michael Kennedy was shot dead while having tea in his garden, the dragnet of the law brought in the four people who were in the garden at the time. They were Hawkins, the butler; Lisa Lark, the opera singer; Don Delray, movie actor; and Colonel Pinkham, the famous explorer.

The case had several peculiar aspects. Sir Michael had been shot by a bullet through the chest, but no firing had been heard nor any weapon found. Also, every suspected person had an apparently perfect alibi. Hawkins had been coming from the house carrying a bottle in one hand and a siphon in the other; it would have been impossible for him to do any firing. Delray was seated, pouring himself another cup of tea. Lisa Lark had strolled off to feed the swans. As she invariably fed the swans too much and one of them had died immediately from overeating, her presence at the pond was proved. Colonel Pinkham was exploring the maze and got lost in it. He had to call for help to get out, so there was no doubt about his whereabouts.

The police, completely baffled, called upon Sir Philip Ferret, the acute London criminologist, for aid. When he arrived everyone was ordered into the library, and the investigation began.

"In which direction did Sir Michael Kennedy face when he was shot?" demanded Sir Philip Ferret.

"He was twirling on his heel to watch an airplane overhead," answered Hawkins. "One really couldn't say which way he faced at the moment."

"Ha!" said Sir Philip. "Then we must use psychology and look for a motive. This is no time for concealment. Did any of you have a motive for killing Sir Michael Kennedy?"

There was no answer.

"I hate to mention it," whispered Lisa Lark, finally, "but Colonel Pinkham and Sir Michael were rivals in youth for Lady Kennedy's hand. Her preference for Sir Michael sent Colonel Pinkham to Africa for twenty years. He is just back."

Colonel Pinkham paled.

"Ha!" said Sir Philip. "Had Colonel Pinkham taken a good look at Lady Kennedy since his return?"

"Several times," murmured Colonel Pinkham.

"So have I," said Sir Philip. "No motive there!"

Colonel Pinkham's color returned.

"I hate to mention it," hesitated Hawkins, "but I awakened Mr. Delray on the morning of the murder. He was asleep when I entered the room but when I suddenly put on the light he sat up and cried, 'Shoot!' Shooting seemed to be on his mind, if I might say so, sir."

Don Delray paled.

"Ha!" said Sir Philip. "Explain that, sir!"

"I thought I was on location when the light flared," faltered Delray. "I am a movie actor. I double for Lon Chaney."

Hawkins clutched Sir Philip's wrist.

"Do you realize what that means?" he hissed. "If he doubles for Lon Chaney he can shoot sitting down, *with his feet!*"

"Ha!" said Sir Philip. "Could you pour tea with your hands, shoot with your feet, and hide the revolver at the same time?"

"That's not in my contract," said Delray, firmly.

"Ha!" said Sir Philip, "then he wouldn't have done it."

Don Delray's color returned.

"I hate to mention it," he said, "but ask Miss Lark *what she was singing* when she returned from feeding the swans."

"Let me see," pondered Lisa Lark. "Why, I was humming that song from 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' 'Listen to my lullaby.'"

Delray shook a menacing finger at her.

"No, you were not!" he accused her. "You were humming, 'Listen to my alibi!' Explain that if you can!"

Lisa Lark paled. She seemed unable to speak.

"Would she have been concerned about an alibi if she had only killed *a swan?*" persisted Delray, turning to Sir Philip Ferret.

Unexpectedly, Sir Philip came to her rescue.

"She did not say alibi," he declared. "That was a trick of your imagination, Delray. You do not understand your own reactions. The murder gave you such a shock that the idea of an alibi became an obsession and you were unable to get away from the word. No, it is perfectly evident that nobody here is guilty."

"Alibi be praised!" ejaculated Delray, the obsessed.

Lisa Lark's color returned.

Sir Philip continued his deductions.

"Not having been shot from below, Sir Michael must have been shot from *above*. Now the only thing above him was the airplane. It is obvious that, as he bent backward to locate the plane, a bullet fired from the air entered his chest. However, as the bullet was not intended for him, it follows that there must have been a second person aloft with the pilot, someone whom the pilot intended to kill. *Find the passenger in that plane and you will find the logical victim of the murder!*"

A dispatch was immediately sent off to Scotland Yard directing that the airplane be located. When the reply came Sir Philip Ferret tore open the message.

"Ha!" he cried. "Solved by psychology!" and he read aloud the confirming words:

"Plane found. Just landed at Upside Downs. Pilot, still enraged, brandishing discharged revolver. Passenger, his wife, still driving from back seat!"

Editor's Easy Chair

AS THE YEAR GOES OUT

BY EDWARD S. MARTIN

FOR ten days at this writing the President of the United States and the Premier of England have sat in the spotlight on the American stage. Mr. MacDonald came over to converse with Mr. Hoover and others in an informal fashion about certain details for provision of peace and, more particularly, to provide against unnecessary expenditures for navies by Great Britain and the United States. It might have been done at arms' length by diplomatic means, but Mr. MacDonald—and indeed both gentlemen—thought it could be better accomplished if the conversations were near to and man to man. So Mr. MacDonald came over, his main errand being obviously enough to give world-publicity to peace intentions and to introduce the saving grace of human speech and human kindness into matters likely to hit snags in the course of settlement. His visit was a great success. He got in ample measure the kind of publicity that was favorable to his errand. As to details, he and Mr. Hoover managed to reach agreement on all the fundamentals, so we may conclude, with reasonable certainty, that so far as the United States and Great Britain are concerned there will be peace on earth and, anyhow, that there will not be a naval competition between these two countries.

It has been a pleasure, as well as profitable, to have our minds dwell on Mr. Hoover and Mr. MacDonald as representatives of their respective countries. Neither of them is a stranger to us; we have known both of them more or less intimately for years, but they take on new interest from having acquired new powers.

The life story of Mr. MacDonald is highly romantic, involving the course of true love (which did run smoothly for him until its too early termination) and a rise from the simple life in Scotland by hard work and a good head, through very angry tempests to the top place in English politics and for a second time. Mr. MacDonald was against the War. He seems still to feel that his opposition to Britain's participation in it was sound, for the War turned out even worse than he anticipated. He sees how bad it was but has never offered, so far as known, his estimate of how bad it might have been if England had kept out of it. As to that question it is much easier—and possibly is warrantable—to think of that War as something destined, and the course of it as not much affected by the opinions of participants or non-participants. Mr. MacDonald survived it both in health and in reputation, and that is lucky, for if he is not a good and useful man, all signs fail.

As far as it goes, the same could be said of Mr. Hoover, of whom Mr. MacDonald seems strongly to approve. He approved of Mr. Wilson while the latter's weight was thrown to keep the United States out of the War, but is said to have ceased to approve of him after our country went in. Oh, well,

that does not much matter. Mr. Wilson's record is made up, or is being made up, for the contemplation of posterity. He has friends and followers still in life, as appeared the other day when, in the course of a book about the pursuit of happiness, Mr. Wilson was represented quite elaborately as a man with a secret disease that thwarted his best efforts. He was exhibited as a failure; but concurrence in that estimate of him was limited, and denial that he had any secret disease which blighted him came with emphasis and in detail from persons whose relations with him had been close and protracted, Mr. Tumulty for one.

Mr. MacDonald has given no exposition of his present views of Mr. Wilson, but it is to rejoice that he has a President to work with who seems to suit him and who has at heart largely the same purposes which he has himself. Nobody seems to have said that Mr. MacDonald in coming to the United States is making the same mistake that Mr. Wilson made when he went to France. That seems like a neglected opportunity, though the question whether Mr. Wilson did make a mistake is still open to discussion, and there is still no lack of living people who will hold that he didn't.

Contemporary and prospective aviation are all on the side of MacDonald and Hoover in their efforts to cut down the cost of navies for Great Britain and these States. Neither Parliament nor Congress, it would seem, can wish to put more money than seems absolutely necessary into warships while aerial progress is going so fast and strong and the limitations of its efficiency in warfare are still so imperfectly defined.

One of the political convictions attributed to Mr. MacDonald is that salutary changes in government or human life must come by growth, and that it does not help to try to bring them about prematurely by legislation. He is especially interested in the physical and mental recuperation of the people of England and their recovery from the ill effects of the industrial system. He is called a socialist. Well, he wants a better life for the working people in England —the miners, the factory hands. He wants them to grow bigger and healthier, also handsomer. In places where arts that belong to domestic life—housekeeping, home-making—have been crushed out by the factory system, he wants them restored and he will work to do it.

VERY good people are still produced in the British Isles. So they are in all countries. But the best people in Great Britain seem to have a fuller understanding of life and a rather better sense about ordering it than their contemporaries in most other countries, and the going is not too easy for them. The newspapers report that an expurgated copy of the Bible has just been issued by the English National Sunday School Union in which such episodes as Joseph and Potiphar's wife are toned down to come within the bounds of propriety, and "harlots" of the prodigal son are softened into "evil companions." That is good news because such a Bible will be needed in Boston shortly if present censors keep their jobs and if Boston is to hold by the Bible at all. But the fable teaches that the improvements in deportment which are attempted in England are no less exasperating than those that are offered to us. To expurgate the Bible is just another example of the eternal effort to restrict the human mind and forbid it to inquire farther than the tenets of some congregation hold to be proper. The idea that people will see no evil if they only keep their eyes shut is popular, and is, no doubt, at the bottom of constant effort to put blinkers on the popular vision. Foolish expurgating is something to be resisted.

Another objectionable matter is the effort of various sects to protect themselves from public criticism. Christian Scientists are offenders in this respect. They offer organized resistance to un-

favorable comment and back it by the secular arm when they can. Mr. Dakin's book about Mrs. Eddy has disturbed them, and they are after it hotfoot, threatening with disfavor publishers, booksellers, reviewers, and anyone who lends a hand to it. The Catholics are about as bad, but somewhat less crude; but tell it to the credit of the Methodists that they do not demand to be let alone, and take their criticism and the most violent opposition without snivelling, though not without hitting back.

Organized religion is always imperfect, always needs watching, occasional criticism, and now and then denunciation. In nothing is free speech more important than in religion. Mussolini seems quite disposed to do his duty of admonition to the Pope; and a bold man he is. Bold also was that Texas clergyman transplanted to Brooklyn, who felt it his duty to proclaim a color line in his church. But discretion has a place even in religion, and the Texas clergyman did not give evidence of having any.

All the religious organizations which own property should remember that their churches or meeting houses are tax free because they are believed to discharge a public service. Christian Scientists, who are so plaintive about Mr. Dakin's book, own a lot of property which, presumably, escapes taxation, and they surely ought not to object to having the limelight thrown on the origins of their remarkable cult. They seem to have proceeded to deify Mrs. Eddy as far as possible, and they do not like to have her halo disturbed. But it is no secret that she was an eccentric person, nor has that hindered Mr. Dakin from doing full credit to her remarkable powers of organization and extraordinary efficiency as a religious leader.

Mrs. Eddy did her job, such as it was, but the beliefs and practice which she personified still seem to be in the process of development, refinement, and revision. She dealt with the mystical phases of the healing power, a very obscure subject. Nevertheless, her activities advanced knowledge and were useful in compelling attention of unwilling minds to certain processes of cure. Her personal history is valuable in shedding light on the conclusions that she put out in her books and that the Church she founded represents and works with. If there are faults in her doctrine—as of course there are—the record of her personal life should help to explain and correct them.

Mr. Dakin represents her as a chronic invalid subject all her life to recurrent bad spells in her health, but very lively and remarkable in her intervals of energy. He does not give her credit for discovering or inventing much of the basic principles of Christian Science: he credits that to Quimby, but he gives Mrs. Eddy full credit for taking Quimby out of the bureau drawer and publishing him to the world. Dakin writes of her with sympathy. His heart bleeds for her enormous struggles. He does not give her a good character. He does not find her to have been kind or constant to her friends. He does credit her with an enormous gift for publicity, a never-say-die spirit, an indefatigable energy for propagating what she had. He does not by any means say that Mrs. Eddy was a no-account person in Christian Science and that Christian Science is a no-account cult, but his book does help one, as other books have helped before, to understand Mrs. Eddy and separate her personality sufficiently from her exposition of Christian Science to form some idea of what is left. For there is something left; the thing did work, and sick people got well under it. Many lives nowadays seem to go along prosperously because of Christian Science. You may not like it, but as a working hypothesis it is worth study.

ALL creeds and all forms of religion are under examination now and subjected to scrutiny very like what needs to be given to Christian Science.

People want to know what is true in them and what is not, and they begin to understand more than they used to that the truth they hope for is not absolute but relative, and depends upon what they know already and upon how much more they can understand.

A vast new knowledge is unfolding. The scientists, so-called, are at work on it; also explorers, excavators, diggers-up both of the recounted and the unrecounted, important verifiers of Scripture as well as of more or less fabulous history. What we may call the religionists vary greatly in their attitude towards new knowledge. The Fundamentalists hang on like grim death to oldtime Scripture statements and oldtime understanding of them. They have need to, for they hang on to much that is true and in danger of being swept away for the moment by too enthusiastic innovators. There are religionists who tread the middle path of safety, keep their eyes open, and wonder what the upshot will be. Still another lot throw Jonah to the whale and make for port. Well, they are all busy and probably all useful, some in conservation, some in preparation. Whatever was ever true is true now. Knowledge that was not understood or was misunderstood will be better understood out of the new knowledge. People with faith need not worry for they are not going on the rocks.

IT IS curious that anything so old-fashioned as Christmas has lasted over in this very, very changing world. It is not quite what it was two generations ago, or even one, but still it goes on, impaired for some people by its increased importance as a time to sell goods, yet still a joyous time and one in which all ties of affection are renewed. But how much does it still stand for the hope of the world? As much as ever, and perhaps really more than ever. For the Great War, that terrific medicine which shook up, and even shook down, the religion of many people, did bring the great polities of the world to an unprecedented recognition of the practical efficiency of Christ's teachings. International politics is slowly turning from combinations for force to combinations for agreement. The idea that the prosperity of any nation involves the prosperity of all nations is growing. The Great War said to the peoples of the world—Get together or perish. Civilization cannot stand much more fighting on the modern scale. The War did, in a sense, put the fear of God into statesmen. In great matters they do not dare threaten, they reason together. Strange times! Full of new combinations; full of collectivism! Looking about one sees

> Merger, merger, everywhere
> And not a drop to drink!

Where is it all coming out? Mass production, mass distribution; enormous combinations of banks; vast money powers; novelties in everything except men. Men are much the same as heretofore. That provision of nature which is now politely termed sex not only continues to keep human life going but continues to run amuck as much as ever. The ambitious effort to detach man entirely from alcohol languishes a good deal in execution, though the warrant to attempt it is in force. The disposition to gamble was never more conspicuous. Nevertheless, there was probably never a time when wealth was better harnessed to the job of improving human life; when the attention of more able and efficient people was better concentrated on the diffusion of health and happiness. There are occasional brays from the lecture platform or elsewhere that the greatest step to the improvement of human life will be the abolition of religion. There always have been such cries from time to time, and no doubt always will be; but religion makes for the understanding of life and is by no means in a hopeless case, and we are much more likely to have more of it than less. But it must be free. It must be open to discussion.

Personal and Otherwise

WITH the appearance, three years ago, of that very fine novel, *The Time of Man*, ***Elizabeth Madox Roberts*** at once took a place among the foremost American novelists of our generation. Miss Roberts has subsequently written two other books, *My Heart and My Flesh* and *Jingling in the Wind*, and a few short stories, one of which ("Children of the Earth," November, 1928) appeared in HARPER'S; at present she is working on a new novel to be called *The Great Meadow*. She makes her home in Springfield, Kentucky, and the two-part story which we begin this month deals with the sort of countryfolk among whom she lives. We wonder if any reader of unspoiled taste can fail to be impressed with the utter naturalness of the characters and their talk and with the strange beauty with which Miss Roberts invests her account of their finding of the treasure.

The air has been so full, in the past year or two, of denunciations of American lawlessness, that it requires some temerity to suggest that there may be a distinction between a statute and a law, and that to defy a statute may not necessarily be to undermine the foundations of the republic. But ***Albert Jay Nock*** has never lacked temerity, and in this instance he has the backing of no less estimable a founding father than Thomas Jefferson, whose biography he wrote some years ago. Mr. Nock now spends most of his time in Europe, and most of his HARPER contributions have dealt with international relations: witness "Peace by Incantation" and "Mr. Smith and Mr. Smythe." Last spring a collection of his papers appeared in book form with the title *On Doing the Right Thing*, and this fall he has brought out a life of Rabelais, written in collaboration with C. R. Wilson.

As we stated last month when we published "Sunset Camp"—the story about wayfarers at a roadside motor-camp in the West—***Ruth Suckow*** is an Iowan, was married last March to Ferner Nuhn, has recently been living in Santa Fé, has just published a novel entitled *Cora*, and is one of the American short-story writers whose work most frequently finds its way into the current anthologies.

In her article in this issue, ***Dorothy Dunbar Bromley*** has tried to deal fairly with every anti-birth-control argument based upon evidence and reason. With arguments based upon authority she obviously cannot deal: as Henry Pratt Fairchild has recently pointed out, either you accept such arguments or you do not; they are clearly not open to discussion. As for Mrs. Bromley's medical evidence, it is perhaps well to bear in mind that although she is not a physician, her "What Risk Motherhood?" (June, 1929) was much praised by physicians for its accuracy and soundness. Mrs. Bromley, a Middle Westerner now resident in New York, is a journalist with an uncommon ability to master the technicalities of diverse subjects; her HARPER articles on divorce, for example, have shown her to be as much at home in the field of law as in that of medicine.

No list of the ablest contemporary experimenters in the technic of fiction is complete without the name of ***Virginia Woolf***, the author of *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, and *Orlando*. This is her first appearance in HARPER'S. Mrs. Woolf is the daughter of the late Sir Leslie Stephen; her husband is Leonard Woolf, literary editor of the London *Nation*.

The drift away from the orthodox creed of Christianity, from belief in a personal God, and even from belief in any God at all, is one of the inescapable and momentous facts of our time. Even a decade ago, it is doubtful if a book like Walter Lippmann's *A Preface to Morals*, addressed to those who have lost

the faith of their fathers, could have come home to so many readers as dealing with their own personal problem. The ranks of the humanists, as they call themselves, who would build a religion without God in it, seem to be swelling. To these humanists and other intelligent modern unbelievers, the orthodox theological arguments seem almost as if spoken in a foreign language; if any deist is to claim their attention he must meet them on their own ground. ***Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick,*** pastor of the Park Avenue Baptist Church of New York, professor of practical theology at Union Theological Seminary, and leader among the liberal Christians of the country, is able to do this. Hence the significance of the article which he contributes to HARPER'S this month.

The second short story of this issue reveals ***Mary Heaton Vorse,*** a HARPER contributor of long standing, in a totally different mood from that of last month, when she gave us the results of her investigations at Gastonia.

In the days when he spelled his name Moderwell, ***Hiram Motherwell*** was a dramatic critic, and at this moment he is editing the *Theatre Guild Magazine*. But eight years of experience as correspondent of the Chicago *Daily News* in Rome and elsewhere in Europe have not only enabled him to write for us two articles on Italian subjects (a forecast of the agreement between Mussolini and the Papacy, published some months before the terms were announced, and a study of Mussolini's imperial ambitions); they have also stimulated Mr. Motherwell's interest in international economics. His new book, *The Imperial Dollar*, is a study of the American financial empire; his present article reveals the important and little-understood economic function of the American tourist in Europe.

Another function of this same tourist is to offer an interesting contrast with the Englishman and the Frenchman in manners. ***Mary Borden,*** Chicagoan by birth, Englishwoman by present residence (she is the wife of Brigadier-General E. L. Spears, C. B.), knows both American and English life intimately and is well equipped to analyze these international differences. Her novels, which have won for her an enviable position in the world of letters, include *Jane, Our Stranger, Four O'Clock,* and *Flamingo*. Some months ago she compared American society with English in a HARPER article.

Early last summer ***Stuart Chase*** was invited to speak at a conference of the League for Industrial Democracy. He was unable to go, and sent to the conference a summary of the address he had expected to make on the future of the great city. To his surprise this summary, brief as it was, was widely reported and commented upon. So great was the public interest in it that at our suggestion he has made it the basis of a more detailed presentation of the dilemma of Megalopolis. Mr. Chase is president of the Labor Bureau, Inc., of New York and author of *Your Money's Worth, Men and Machines,* and a forthcoming book, *Prosperity, Fact or Myth?* His HARPER article of last August, "Laid Off at Forty," attracted much attention.

Since the days when he was an aviator on the Western Front, ***James Norman Hall*** (like his fellow-flyer and collaborator, Charles Nordhoff) has spent most of his time living in Tahiti, writing about the South Seas and occasionally returning—as he does this month—to his memories of 1918.

Among the candidates for Parliament elected when Ramsay MacDonald was swept into power last spring was ***Mary Agnes Hamilton,*** who under the pen name of Iconoclast had written Mr. MacDonald's biography a few years previously. She now gives us a close-range view of a scene which few Americans are fortunate enough to witness, and these only from the remote altitude of the strangers' gallery.

Gerald W. Johnson, who writes so eloquently of the lost generation in the South, is a North Carolinian, a former member of the faculty of the University of North Carolina, an editorial writer for the Baltimore *Evening Sun,* and the author of a recent life of Andrew Jackson. His latest HARPER contribution was "Fra Angelico and the Cabin Passenger" (February, 1929).

T T T

The poets this month are ***Shaemas O'Sheel,*** a newcomer to HARPER'S who

lives in Brooklyn, and ***James B. Gitlitz*** of Binghamton, New York, a senior at Cornell University who made his first HARPER appearance two months ago.

❦ ❦ ❦

E. B. White of the editorial staff of the *New Yorker* is one of the principal reasons for the humorous success of that publication; he is also the author of a volume of verses entitled *The Lady Is Cold* (signed E. B. W.), and, with James Thurber, of a forthcoming book, *Is Sex Necessary?* in which his present contribution to the Lion's Mouth will be included. In the same department appears ***Sarah Fletcher Milligan*** of Saratoga Springs, New York, who disguised herself as Jane A. Non when she contributed "The Code of the Caravans" to the Lion's Mouth two or three years ago.

❦ ❦ ❦

"Christmas," the etching by ***Robin Tanner*** reproduced as the frontispiece of this issue, is only the sixth plate produced by Mr. Tanner, an English artist still in his twenties. He is a native of Chippenham in Wiltshire who went through the Godsmiths College in London, began to teach drawing at twenty-one, and two years later decided to give up teaching and concentrate on etching. This plate, we are told, was done from drawings made at Castlecomb, an English village which has been untouched for hundreds of years and contains not a single modern house.

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May we suggest to Lion's Mouth contributors that we pray daily for shorter contributions and that articles of one thousand words, or even less, are as highly regarded—all other things being equal—as articles of two thousand? We admit that one of the chief offenders in the matter of length is a member of the Magazine staff, but are happy to report that an apology for his bad example has been wrung from him and that he has already hung above his desk a motto commending the virtues of brevity.

❦ ❦ ❦

First hand testimony to back up Anna Steese Richardson on the decline of the women's clubs, from a man who has lectured countless times before them, and who now writes, he says, with a guilty conscience because he expects to go right on lecturing:

Apropos of Mrs. Richardson's sane and perfectly delightful article in the current number of HARPER'S MAGAZINE I am going to tell you that at one time one of our noted New England artists gave a talk on art before a large club of women near Boston. He described in detail two or three paintings in the Salon in Paris. At the close of the meeting a much dolled-up and newly rich member of the club came up to him and said,

"Well, if anyone here can appreciate your talk I can, for I have went to Paris and have saw all of them paintings you spoke on."

Now, I have "went" to hundreds of women's clubs and have "saw" them in even violent action. For this reason my reaction to Mrs. Richardson's article was such that my wife asked me to-day what in time I was tittering about at two and even three o'clock this morning. As the article is dead certain to bring fierce reproaches upon your head and you may even be haled into court for it, you may call upon me to take oath that every word of it is true.

Recognizing the admirable work the clubs in the past have done, and not forgetting that they still have a definite value in some places, the fact remains that Mrs. Richardson is dead right when she says that they are losing their "intelligent" members and that they ought to dissolve their present organization and start over again on new and constructive lines more in harmony with the spirit and the demands of the present day. It is all bosh to talk about "three millions of club women standing back of all forward movements" when probably two million five hundred thousand of them, excellent ladies though they are, know less and care less about some of the most important "forward movements" than they know about bridge.

❦ ❦ ❦

Another echo of "It Paid to Be a Bargain Wife":

The article you published in HARPER'S for September, "It Paid to Be a Bargain Wife," started me thinking. In a number of respects my position is similar to the author's, especially in regard to my courtship and the need for economizing. I feel sure, however, that my marriage will turn out a success; perhaps because I was so thoroughly grounded in economy, with the necessity at the same time for putting up more than a

respectable "front." Anyone who is the daughter of a minister and of a mother like mine knows that it can be done. I too graduated with a *cum laude*, but my mother considered that a woman should know how to manage her own home before anything else. I believe the anonymous writer's greatest mistake was that they did not love each other; their life was not actually on a 50-50 basis; she was carrying more than her share of the load. How could one expect her husband to feel much more than a very sincere admiration for what she was doing? Seemingly she spent most of her time in caring for the babies which they should never have had—then, at least—and making no effort to make herself attractive, interesting, desirable to her husband. There's no use in letting things you enjoy become commonplace.

❦ ❦ ❦

As we go to press, our November issue has only just appeared, but already the comments are coming in. Two old friends of the Magazine are among the first to write us. The first sends us this note from Irvington-on-Hudson, New York:

Bravo to you and Duffield for "Mussolini's American Empire." The antis can't get a thing on you; the truth is there and evidentially documented.

Please have the full courage of your convictions and send a copy of the Magazine to every U. S. Senator and Congressman as well as to the President and his Cabinet officers. Do this for your country.

The other comment comes from Winifred Kirkland:

I'm so thrilled by the November HARPER'S that I can't wait to tell you so! I think the Mussolini article is the bravest thing I've ever seen published. The sheer, splendid courage of that one issue of an American magazine makes me proud to be an American.

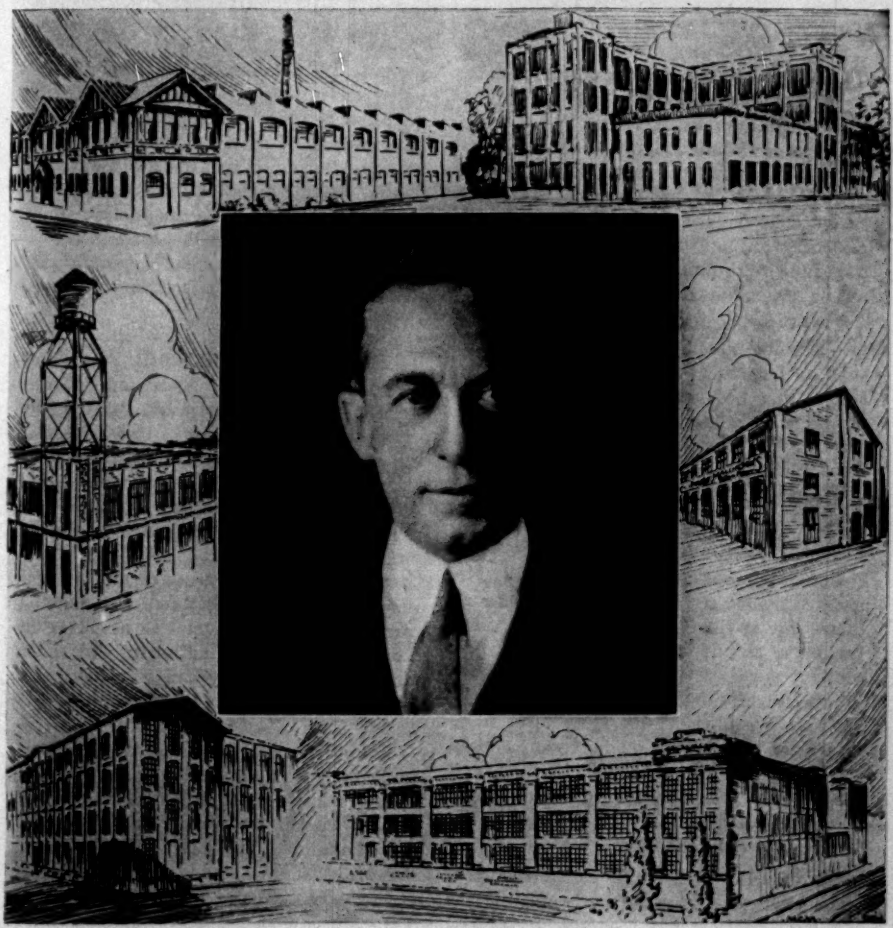
❦ ❦ ❦

A girl who "wishes she were back in Chicago" stopped at a hotel news-stand on her first night in New York, bought our October number, and read John Gunther's article on Chicago racketeers and Lillian Symes's "Our Last Frontier." Her comments on New York, dashed off that very night, indicate that she will probably endorse the sentiments of Mr. Chase in this issue:

So this is New York! From the twenty-ninth floor of this great steel structure—to which height I have been rushed by an express elevator with an elevator boy so electrically charged that his ears do not absorb the difference between the words twenty-three and thirty-three—I view the metropolis, a city that needs to wash its face and comb its hair! Five-story tenements flank one side of the street on which I gaze, and million-dollar film palaces, the other. Clothes, which except for their physical position on clothes-lines evidence no visit to the laundry tub, span yards and alleys. Children on scooters race up and down, slatternly women stand by old stone stoops, flappers with carmen cupid's bows where lips should be and scanty clothing grasped tightly *à la mode* scurry down the streets. Automobile sirens blow, tugboat whistles toot, the fire-engine sears the street, the elevated screeches and growls, the street cars sizz, the policeman's canary-like whistle trills incessantly—and this bedlam of noises is Manhattan, to which all of ambitious America is credited with turning! This madhouse is the city where genius can flaunt itself unharried by provincial criticism, where youth can lose itself in self-expression!

I ask a policeman how to get to the nearest subway station; he replies in an accent so broad that it spans the Atlantic. I let myself be swallowed up by the crowds until somehow I arrive where I should be—and it's Times Square Station! We have a toy maze at home, but that's easy compared with finding the right subway train at Times Square. Not having brought a foreign dictionary along I gaze at the subway starters in despair, and then for fear of being lost in the seething waves of humanity I forfeit my nickel, retrace my steps, and lose myself anyhow by coming out of some hole I didn't go into. I hail a taxi; the driver can understand if not speak my tongue, and I slither back to my hotel.

Racketeers in Chicago? They're angels compared to the mobs in New York!



Hiram R. Mallinson, President of H. R. Mallinson & Co., Inc., a powerful factor in the development and advancement of the silk industry of America. A pioneer in the manufacturing of silks of high quality and in novelty designs that vie with the finest produced in Europe. (*See Over*)

A STORY OF MALLINSON SILKS

NOT so long ago the idea pertained in the American mind that all really fine silks came from France. Silk was produced in the United States too, to be sure: but the American producers generally were more interested in quantity than in quality, their designs were of indifferent merit, and the public accordingly took it for granted that the exquisite products of French looms could not be rivaled on this side of the water.

That time has passed. The European fetish has lost its potency. France still provides silks as fine as ever, but she is no longer alone. The best of American Silk manufacturers have learned the advantage of fine quality. And what is more, the public recognizes the fact.

For this remarkable change much of the credit must go to Hiram R. Mallinson, president of H. R. Mallinson & Co., Inc.

Born at Utica, New York, in 1871, Mr. Mallinson acquired in early years a thorough knowledge of silks. He began as a salesman, became a sales manager, then established his own organization and finally brought it to international fame. Nowadays the press calls Mr. Mallinson the "silk king." But more important than his personal success has been the bold policy which brought it about, and the effect of his policy on the buying habits of the nation. He chose as a guiding slogan: "Dare to be different."

Mr. Mallinson believed — in the days when such a belief seemed mad — that it was not only possible but economically practicable to weave on American looms silks as perfect in quality and distinctive in texture as any made in Europe. He instilled this ideal into the minds of his mill superintendents, devising ingenious systems at the mills to promote its attainment; he resolutely insisted on quality even at the expense of quantity; he spent endless time and effort on the creation of fresh color harmonies and unusual designs of real artistic merit. And finally, convinced that his silks would stand the most exacting tests if the public could be induced to look for quality in an American product, he carried through the greatest campaign of educational advertising ever projected by a silk manufacturer.

How much of the enormous increase in the use of American silk during the past decade has been due to Mr. Mallinson's pioneer work it is impossible to judge. But the facts are clear. Eighty per cent of the silk used in the world today is manufactured in America, and eighty per cent of it is consumed in America. A revolution has taken place in women's dress as they have come to appreciate the advantages of silk: shimmering beauty of texture, wearing quality without weight or bulk, and adaptability to manifold uses. And with this revolution has come another People of discriminating taste who know now that this country can give them silks as perfect as any made anywhere in the world.

Mallinson silks — such as Pussy Willow, Indestructible Flat Chiffon, and numerous others — have become recognized not only in America but in Europe, South America, and Australia, as the standard of perfection. But Mr. Mallinson and his able partner, Mr. E. Irving Hanson, are not going to stop here. They are now planning to build additional mills and to develop new and attractive textures and designs, at prices within the range of thousands who never before believed they could afford silks of such high character.

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IN THE FINANCIAL WORLD

Utility Holding Companies

By PAUL TOMLINSON

IN spite of all that is written and talked about the great bull stock market, it is nevertheless a fact that in the first three-quarters of the current calendar year about seventy-five per cent of the stocks listed on the New York Stock Exchange actually declined in price. The remaining twenty-five per cent of course have done better, and so spectacular has been the performance of certain issues that their lustre has almost entirely dimmed the failure of the majority to emulate their example. The investing public—except those persons who own stocks showing them a loss—are naturally most interested in the issues which are going up, and if one had to name a class which enjoys the greatest popular favor, the nomination would almost unquestionably go to the public utilities.

A DOZEN public utility issues chosen at random from the New York Stock Exchange show an appreciation in price ranging in the year 1929 from thirteen to ninety-eight per cent. The average advance is about forty per cent. Why is this? Have the utilities some inherent qualities that other kinds of stocks lack? Is their future brighter than that of other companies? Are they better managed? Do they enjoy preferential rates? Are their products more readily salable? There must be some good reason for their popularity. What is the explanation?

IT is fundamental, of course, that every successful business must be well managed, financially sound, and have something to sell that is in demand. No one can deny that what the utilities offer for sale is in demand, and of course there is no more important asset than this in any business. On the whole, too, the majority of them are well managed and financially sound, but none of these facts, nor all of them for that matter, are quite sufficient to account for their really phenomenal progress. Other businesses can match the utilities in these qualities, but their stocks are not in the same demand, and do not sell at comparable prices. What is the great factor in the utilities' success? What have they got that other businesses lack?

WELL, public utility service is so essential to modern social, economic, and industrial life that the utilities find little difficulty in disposing of their wares. If this is not the whole story, however, then it must be the methods employed by the utilities in managing their properties and in marketing their products that cause their earnings to mount so consistently and satisfactorily. It may be interesting and profitable to inquire into these methods.

FIRST of all, however, it must be emphasized that public utility service is absolutely indispensable to the country's welfare. How could business be carried on to-day without the telephone and telegraph? How could factories operate without electric current to drive their machinery? Electricity and gas are essential to home life. Of course everyone uses water. In spite of the millions of motor cars on our roads, the subways, elevated trains, and street cars are still patronized by millions, and the railroads are rapidly changing over from steam to electricity. It is estimated that more than sixty million people, or over half the population of the country, are regular users of electrical current. This great army is made up not only of customers of the utilities, but a considerable percentage of them are stockholders as well. Now with this vast number of customers, and faced with the problem of serving them efficiently and cheaply, the utilities have gone in for mass production and mass production methods. And this is the principal factor in their success.

SMALL operating companies have relatively larger overheads than the big ones; they cannot afford to employ the best engineers and managers; their

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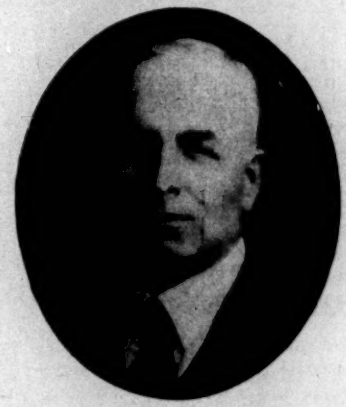

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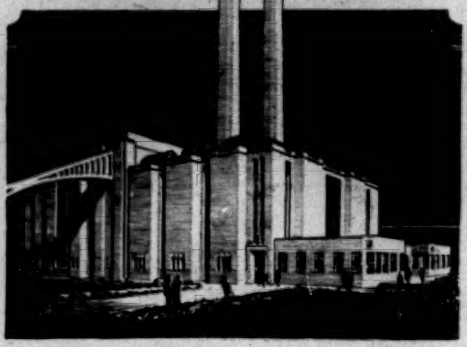

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smaller margins of profit do not provide them with funds for the purchase of the most economical and latest mechanical equipment; small companies are not so liable to be located most strategically, and their businesses are not usually diversified enough to give them the desired distribution of load. Small companies operate under a tremendous handicap, and it is only natural that realization of this fact has led small units to form combinations and to make themselves sufficiently large to obviate as many of these obstacles in the way of their most successful performance as they can. These combinations have effected economies for the customers and increased profits for the stockholders at the same time, a very happy combination of results. So well have these combinations worked out that they have become the usual thing in the public utility field, and as was to be expected, have grown constantly larger in size. There have been combinations of combinations, and still further combinations, until the size of some of these businesses is enough to stagger the imagination. And as they have grown in size there has been a wider diversification of their interests. Now all of this has been to the advantage of the public and of the stockholders, but it has not been the practice of the utilities to assume that because a thing works well it cannot be made to work better. As the combinations have grown larger and more diversified in interest it has been found that the management of such gigantic corporations has become increasingly complicated and difficult. So another step has had to be taken, and borrowing from the experience of other businesses, the utilities have taken unto themselves and adapted to their own requirements, the holding company.

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GENERATIONS of experience have shown that business conditions and security values do not ordinarily fluctuate at the same time or in the same direction in the various countries of the world. While some are prospering, others lag behind. While some have more capital than they can profitably use, others need capital so badly that they are willing to pay liberally for it, even on good security.

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BEFORE proceeding to a brief consideration of some of the various kinds of holding companies, it might be well to recount a few achievements which are generally admitted to be to their credit.

EVERYONE knows that money is not worth as much as it used to be, and yet the consumer actually pays fewer dollars and cents per kilowatt hour for his electric current than he did twenty-five years ago. If one figures money value to-day in terms of its value in 1913 the buyer of so-called domestic electricity pays less than half as much for his electricity now as he did in that year before the war. Of course this has come about because the utilities have been able to produce electric current more cheaply than formerly, due to more scientific and economical methods, and because it is used in greater quantities. In six years the average quantity of coal required to produce electricity for the industrial plants of this country was reduced from three pounds per kilowatt hour to 1.87. In another six years the amount of electrical power used by industry increased by almost six and a half million horse-power, or twenty-two per cent. And at the beginning of this year there were a half million farms in the United States supplied with electricity, as compared with one hundred and seventy-five thousand in the year 1924.

PICK out the statement of almost any public utility corporation you choose and it will be the exceptional one that has not increased its business and earnings over the previous year. The demand for what the utilities have to sell seems to have no limit, and increased output is almost always a factor in lower costs;

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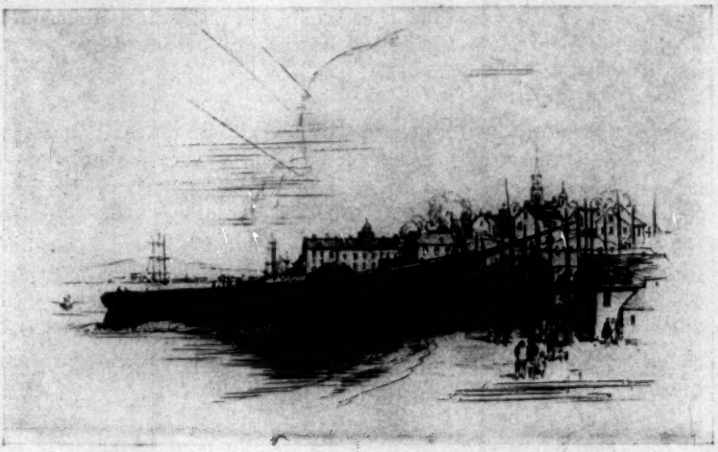

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when costs are still further reduced by economies in production it is no wonder that earnings are favorable.

MANY people in the public utility business itself believe that the holding company is largely responsible for the industry's growth and prosperity. These companies reduced to their simplest terms are corporations formed to invest in and hold the securities of other corporations. Suppose there are four public utility corporations in various towns of central New York; these corporations, known as A, B, C, and D, are engaged in the business of supplying the communities where they are located with electricity, gas, and water; they are operating companies actually engaged in producing and marketing these commodities. Like all corporations they have issued stock. Suppose that all of their stock, or a controlling interest, is owned by a fifth corporation known as E. This last corporation is not an operating company at all; it does nothing in the way of producing or selling public utility products; it was formed merely for the purpose of owning or controlling other utility corporations which do operate. E is a holding corporation. Its stock may be owned by the public; maybe it is listed on the New York Stock Exchange; its earnings may be large. All of E's income, of course, is derived from its investments; it is like a rich man, a capitalist, who lives on the dividends and interest he receives, and whose only work in the world is to keep in touch with the various businesses in which his money is invested.

THE holding corporation, of course, usually owns all or a controlling interest in the corporations it has in-

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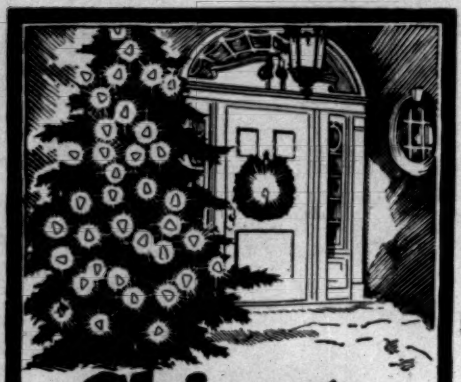

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vested in, and the policy and practice of these various owned businesses are therefore subject to the wishes of the directors of the holding company. These directors can be kept in constant touch with all the affairs of the different subsidiaries, and yet they are not bothered with the details of their actual operation. When financing is to be done in the interests of some subsidiary, the holding company can arrange it quickly and easily. It is more powerful financially of course than its owned and controlled companies, and yet all of these smaller units can benefit from the holding company's stronger credit.

ONE of the most important and beneficial features of a holding company is its flexibility. It can expand to any limits it feels are justified; it can invade any territory which seems to its advantage; it is not hampered by legal difficulties as combinations of operating companies are hampered; politics do not affect it greatly; it can work out its salvation to the best interests of all concerned; it can add new companies to its list of holdings; it can dispose of others; it is concerned only with building up the most workable combination of units it can, and that is all. But that is the reason for its success.

ALL holding companies are not alike. Some operating companies, through ownership or control of other operating companies, are holding companies in so far as those companies are concerned. Sometimes through ownership of a controlling interest in subsidiary companies they are able to direct and supervise these companies' operations. Sometimes holding companies exercise no control whatever over the activities of owned or controlled subsidiaries, merely receiving the dividends from

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their investments and thus swelling their revenues. Sometimes the holding company merely acts as a banker and financial counsellor for its subsidiaries. Sometimes it furnishes engineering and management advice. Probably no two holding companies work the same way or have exactly the same characteristics. They are flexible, in other words, and each can proceed along the lines most advantageous to it, to its subsidiaries, to its customers, and to its stockholders.

THINK of the economies that a holding company can effect in the purchase of raw materials. It can order coal in quantity for all of its subsidiaries, can buy machinery and equipment in the same way, and in the course of a year the savings realized by buying on a large scale are bound to be enormous. Such savings mean better and cheaper service, and increased profits. Holding companies make possible the erection of the large and up-to-date generating units, which are indispensable to good service and satisfactory profits nowadays. They have the money to pay for the high-powered transmission systems which are becoming common sights in all parts of the country, and which make it possible for current not only to be carried into otherwise inaccessible communities, but to be exchanged with other systems, thus spreading the loads out economically.

HOLDING companies have made it possible to engage the best engineering and financial talent, and place it at the disposal of the small company; they have made better and more economical management possible; they have recast the financial structure of the public utility business and placed it on a sound basis. They have simplified the process of raising new capital, one of the most important problems in any busi-

How *Big* Is a Town?

RANKING towns and cities by their human population is not the best way to compare them. When manual toil created most wealth, the man power of a community determined how much it could produce. But in an age of electrical power, usable anywhere any time, available man power no longer sets limits upon the wealth and buying power of a town or village. The notion that the choicest markets are to be found in dense swarms of humanity comes from mental habits inherited from the older day.

The Middle West Utilities System provides electric power to four thousand small and medium-sized communities with a population of 6,000,000. A population of that size has about 2,400,000 people gainfully employed. The power distributed to these communities is equivalent to the working capacity of over 11,000,000 able-bodied men working eight hours a day the year round. No mere "counting of noses" can measure the productive capacity of these towns.

Electric power used in the small communities goes directly into net gains of productive ability and better living. The power used in great cities is largely absorbed in moving people to and from their jobs. The larger the city the more power must be diverted to traction, elevators and other means of combating the handicaps of congestion. In one great city a 15 per cent gain in population caused a 50 per cent increase in car-riding.

In the smaller community no such pyramiding of power use is required. It follows that electric power put to work in a small town profits its people more than the same amount of electric energy in a great metropolis. Electric power brings to the small town a greater per-capita productive ability than it can possibly bring to the big city.

All-pervading net-works of electric power systems, which can be tapped anywhere, have equipped the small town with this productive advantage.

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Provision of power supply to small communities on a scale equivalent to the service available in the great metropolitan centers is the achievement and responsibility of the Middle West Utilities System, a group of electric companies furnishing service to more than four thousand communities located in twenty-nine states.

The strategic position of the small town in American industrial development is fully discussed in the booklet, "America's New Frontier," which the Middle West Utilities Company (20 North Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois) will send upon request.

MIDDLE WEST UTILITIES COMPANY

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ness. Is it any wonder that the holding company has swept all before it in the public utility field?

IN the United States to-day, outside a dozen of the largest cities, there are about thirty public utility holding companies providing the country with the largest part of its utility requirements. Holding companies control the corporations operating the few more than a hundred central power stations which furnish the country with nearly ninety per cent of the total output. Holding companies work well in most fields of industry, but nowhere better than in the public utility business. The way in which investors have favored utility stocks would seem to indicate that they believe this too; and of course it is not only the stocks of the holding companies which benefit, but those of the owned, controlled, and supervised subsidiaries as well.

ONE would think perhaps that the development of the holding company might have stifled competition, made the public utility industry monopolistic, and increased the cost to the consumer. This has not proved to be the case. Public utilities have been monopolies to a large extent for a long time, and strange as it may seem, the holding company has rather opened up the field again. There are new territories constantly appearing, suitable for development by the public utilities; local corporations are not nearly as ambitious as large holding companies, and these latter are ever on the lookout for new opportunities for more business. The keenest sort of competition often develops for control of new areas, and one result is often the lowering of rates. Further, it is obvious that in order to attract new business, no matter where it may be, in a new district or in an old one, one of the most approved methods is to keep rates down and service at a high level. Holding companies realize the advantages of new business and will go a long way to get it.

THE holding company in the utility field is evidently here to stay. It has worked well to date, and should continue to work well in the future. It is a perfectly logical development, it has brought utility service to hitherto isolated parts of the country, has improved that service, and made it cost less. The buyer of public utility service has every reason to support the holding company, and certainly the holding company has been good to buyers of public utility securities.

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